

Prefect Spartan

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Summary: During the Requiem Campaign, a Spartan was sent to test a Forerunner/Human hybrid armor, but when escaping Requiem, an event caused the Spartan and his Fireteam to be sent to an unknown place where they face unknown enemies and gain new allies in the process. There will be a pairing or pairings.

1. Prolouge

In the year 2557, after the defeat of the Didact, UNSC Infinity returns to Requiem to investigate the Forerunner Planet. There were a bunch of Spartan-IV Fireteams on UNSC Infinity, but the main two are Fireteams Crimson and Majestic. Fireteam Crimson is a four man squad and their squad leader is Spartan John Walker. Walker has been the UNSC's Top Spartan-IV, but his inspiration to join the Spartan-IV Program was because of the Master Chief, Humanity's Greatest Hero. During the Requiem Campaign, Walker and his squad did a lot of amazing things, even surviving the first encounter with the Prometheans, from what he read of the report. They recovered an Artifact that basically acted as a teleporter down to the planet. Walker and the rest of Fireteam Crimson were sent down to Requiem to hunt down Parg Vol, a Sangheili Terrorist and known associate of the Covenant Leader, Jul'Mdama. Although, he might've evaded their first and second hit, they found and killed the Sangheili Terrorist.

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><p>Walker and his Team were back on Infinity to prepare for their next mission until Commander Sarah Palmer walked in and said,<p>

"Spartan Walker, The eggheads have something for you."

Walker followed the Commander to the labs where the scientists were finishing up on a new MJOLNIR Powered Assault Armor. The Scientists noticed the Spartans as the head Scientist asked the Commander,

"Is this the Spartan that the Captain wanted?"

Palmer replied, "Walker happens to be one of the best Spartans on this ship. Captain Lasky requested that Walker tried out this experiment." Walker noticed a little sarcasm in her voice. Walker always knew that Commander Palmer never liked scientists, but they designed the armor, but in truth it was Dr. Halsey who designed it, but she was a scientist. When he knew that Halsey was onboard Infinity, he wanted to go speak with her about her methods for creating the Spartan-IIs like the Master Chief, but he had other matters that he had to deal with. The head Scientist asked Walker,

"Spartan Walker, you want to know why you are here."

Walker replied, "I was requested to come down here, because you have a new experimental armor."

The Scientist introduced the new armor, "This is the Prefect Armor, and it was first tested Denegroth on Europa. The Prefect Armor is a hybrid of Human and Forerunner technology from the Shield World which was formerly known as Onyx. Infinity received the schematics for the armor, and we build a set of the armor on this ship. But we needed a Spartan and the Captain requested you to use the Prefect Armor."

Walker finished, "And you want me to use it in combat on Requiem?" The Scientist nodded as Walker stepped into armor assembly systems as he was rotated around while the mechanisms place the pieces of the Prefect Armor on his undersuit. When he stopped rotating and he was wearing the Prefect Helmet, he looked at the armor that he was wearing and looked the pointy armored feet and said,

"This armor is pretty interesting."

The Scientist replied, "Don't mind about the helmet's visor. It still produces a traditional HUD like in the other helmets."

Commander Palmer complemented, "You look good, Walker." The Prefect Spartan replied, "Likewise, Ma'am."

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><p>Walker and Fireteam Crimson were sent down to Requiem to find Gabriel Thorne of Fireteam Majestic. But while they were waiting for extraction, their evac pelican was shot down and they were captured by the Covenant. Walker put the Prefect armor to good use when he and his team broke out and captured a Phantom along with Lieutenant TJ Murphy who became their pilot. After going on a bunch of incursions using the captured Phantom, Walker and his team discovered a bunch of HAVOK mines missing their warheads. Soon after that, they were recalled to return to Infinity to hold off a Storm Covenant Attack on the ship. After holding off the attack, Walker overheard a conversation between Captain Lasky and the bitch herself, Serin Osman. He read Osman's background and discovered that she was a Spartan-II Washout for failing the augmentations. Walker thought to himself,<p>

"No wonder she hates Dr. Halsey." That name soon struck him when he

realized that she was abducted by the Prometheans. After listening in on the conversation, Walker was shaking in his Prefect Armor to warn Fireteam Majestic.

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><p>Once he reached Fireteam Majestic, he explained what he heard during the conversation about Osman giving Lasky the order to eliminate Catherine Halsey. Majestic just listened to him and studied every single bit of information that Walker gave them. Spartan DeMarco asked,<p>

"Are you sure that Admiral Osman gave a kill order on Dr. Halsey?"

Walker nodded, "I'm real sure about it. If the Master Chief got word of Admiral Osman ordering a kill on Halseyâ€¦..well, he might just have to kill Osman."

Spartan Grant asked, "So why did you come to us when you could've explained it to your fireteam?"

Walker shrugged, "Fireteam Crimson is already preparing for another mission down to Requiem. But I have an assignment for you, Majestic."

Spartan Thorne who just got back to Infinity asked, "What do you want us to do?"

Walker took out the kill order, "It's most likely that Commander Palmer would carry out killing Halsey. I want you guys to follow Commander Palmer, stop her and rescue Halsey from Jul'Mdama."

Spartan Anthony Madsen asked, "Why are you doing this?"

Walker replied before leaving, "I think that she helped Jul'Mdama because he had no knowledge of Forerunners choosing humans over his own race. But Glassman told me that Jul is after the area where the Chief encountered the Librarian. Jul is as blind as the loyalists were during the war."

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><p>Walker and his team went through their mission and rescued Fireteam Switchback which was captured by the Covenant in an attempt to disable a Covenant Harvester. After going through their missions, Walker and his team were now set on an emergency broadcast as Captain Lasky warned,<p>

"All Spartan Teams, this is Captain Lasky. We have an emergency!"

Walker said, "This is Crimson, go ahead sir."

Lasky responded, "Jul'Mdama got away with Halsey and Requiem is on a collision course with the sun."

Walker said, "Roger, We're going to evacuate Requiem."

Commander Palmer butted over the comm, "Negative, Crimson! Infinity is anchored to Requiem by two artifacts that are in separate locations. Majestic and I are going after the one on our end."

Walker nodded, "My team will go after the other."

"Just don't let the Covenant kill you before I do for ordering Majestic to stop me behind my back." replied Palmer.

Walker shook his head to know that Palmer found out, so he ordered Crimson to return to the Harvester, only to discover that it's been disabled and it needs a new power core. Crimson went into another area where Crimson 2 salvaged a Power Core from a Covenant Lich. They returned to the Harvester, where Crimson 3 powered up the Harvester and destroyed an obstruction in their path. Crimson 4 took point while Walker took the rear and kept an eye out for Prometheans. When Crimson reached the artifact, they took what much time they had left, disabling and retrieving the artifact. Walker and his team loaded the artifact onto the Pelican and contacted Majestic,

"Crimson to Majestic, Status Report!"

Commander Palmer came on, "Walker, you disabled the artifact yet?"

Walker replied, "Yeah, we didâ€¦" He heard gunshots from both sides as both Covenant and Prometheans began firing on him. He also heard some gunshots on Palmer's end, he said as he ran for the Pelican,

"MOVE IT, MAJESTIC!"

He boarded the Pelican and was ready to be off of Requiem for good.

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><p>Lasky heard from Roland, the Ship's AI, that both Crimson and Majestic were on their way back to Infinity and time was nearly out as Requiem was dangerously close to the sun. Roland said,<p>

"Sir, Crimson and Majestic are inbound for Infinity."

Lasky nodded, "Nice Job, let's hope they can get aboard." He heard a transmission between the two Pelicans. One was Walker's voice,

"Commander Palmer, That artifact we've loaded onto the Pelican is showing some activity that is different from the one we recovered before."

Palmer replied with sarcasm, "What seems to be the problem, John?"

Walker replied, "Sarah, itsâ€¦.its linking itself with my armor!" Crimson's Pelican vanishes into a Slipspace Rupture as Palmer yells,

"Crimson, come in. Crimsonâ€¦.Walker, are you there!?"

Thorne watched as the rupture disappeared, "Commander, we'll worry about them later, we need to get back to Infinity."

Majestic's Pelican reached Infinity as the ship entered a Slipspace when the artifact onboard Infinity tampered with the Ship's Forerunner engines therefore causing Roland to detect a Slipspace anomaly. As Palmer and Fireteam Majestic exited the Pelican, Palmer told DeMarco,

"Walker told you guys to stop me."

Spartan Grant responded, "Because unlike you, he doesn't trust Admiral Osman and judging by her history with Halsey, it was with good reason."

Spartan Thorne took out the first half of the Janus Key, "If Halsey was in line with Jul'Mdama, why would she give us this?"

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><p>Meanwhile on the Covenant's side, Jul'Mdama was furious about Halsey giving one half of the Janus Key to the Spartans as well as losing her arm, he said in human language,<p>

"You've given the other half to your compatriots?"

Halsey replied, "Only to find out that my 'Compatriots' were a Firing Squad. But one managed to fire while the others did not."

Jul asked, "How come the others didn't kill you?"

Halsey smiled, "Spartan Commander John Walker, the only Spartan wearing the Prefect Armor. I suppose your men have reports of him and his team?"

The Shipmaster looked at the various reports of Fireteam Crimson and saw the Spartan that she was talking about. "This is this John Walker?"

Halsey nodded, "He is the UNSC's Top Spartan-IV all those commendations he earned in the past 4 years were because of his faith in my Spartan, John-117."

Jul sneered, "You created the Demons?"

Halsey calmly responded, "Now is not the time to talk about what I did."

Jul let it go for now and asked, "What do you propose?"

Halsey took the Janus Key and said, "The UNSC tried to execute me and I know who's responsible."

Jul asked, "What do you wish?"

Halsey replied, "Its simple, Jul. I want revenge on Admiral Serin Osman."

2. That's a Greeting

Chapter 2: That's a Greeting

Commander Walker and Fireteam Crimson were in Slipspace which was impossible. Alex Grayson, Walker's number 2 responded,

"This is impossible for a drop ship to enter Slipspace!"

Walker contacted Lucy Davenport, his number 3 and Josh Tanner, his number 4, "Guys, what's the artifact is doing now?"

Davenport looked at it and its energy was soon reaching a high point until, "The Artifact's energy is fluctuating, we'll be out of Slipspace soon."

Tanner replied, "I'm surprised that the Pelican isn't falling apart and it's not usually rated for Slipspace."

Walker said, "Roger, guys." He contacted Lieutenant Murphy, "Murphy, we'll be out of Slipspace soon enough."

Murphy replied, "Good, Commander." The Pelican exited Slipspace and soon they came into contact with a massive object in their path. It had five massive arms, it sported a ring on the end that almost reminded each of them of the Halo Ring, Installation 03, and they noticed a fleet of unknown ships guarding the object. They saw how the ships were not moving to intercept them, Grayson said,

"Judging that the ships aren't heading for us, I guess they haven't spotted us yet."

Until Grayson spotted lights on the inside of the arms, it was strange until he saw buildings on each of the arms, he told Walker,

"Each of those arms have cities on them, this object is a Space Station."

Walker noted, "Too big to be a Space Station, but oh well." He told Murphy, "Lieutenant, take us in."

Murphy took the Pelican in proximity of one of the arms of the station; the Spartans saw a lot of stuff in the city while flying over it. Walker told Murphy,

"Murphy, we need someplace to land before we attract some unwanted attention."

Grayson looked used the Pelican's scanners as he soon spoke, "Commander, we've got a firefight going on near some sort of car port."

Walker knew that Grayson is an expert in tech, "What can you describe of this firefight?"

Grayson looked at the scanner's results and a picture of what he scanned, "It showsâ€¦..wait, that can't be right." He continued, "It shows Mercenary Elements trying to kill a human wear civilian attire."

Walker looked at the picture and showed the human male wearing civilian attire while carrying a silenced pistol, "Definitely human." He spotted a human's companion following him through the carport. He stared at the alien that is with the human and noticed that this alien female is wearing an environment suit, with two slits that showed the eyes. It was remarkably human except for the three digit hands and two digit feet. He asked Grayson,

"Anything on the mercenaries, that is chasing them?" Grayson looked at a picture of the two holding the line at the carport while the mercs are gunning for them. He saw these mercs sporting some unusual armor by UNSC standards. Grayson asked,

"What's your call sir? Should we move in to assist and kill the mercenaries?"

Walker felt that he was obligated provide assistance for both human and alien, "Murphy, take us over the carport, we're going to bring the noise."

Murphy replied, "Aye, Commander, Carport in sight."

Walker opened a comm to the cargo bay, "Davenport, Tanner, ready weapons, we're going outside in a few minutes."

Davenport replied, "Ready for action, Commander."

Tanner added, "I was getting bored of sitting around in this Pelican with nothing but Lucy and the Forerunner Artifact for company."

Grayson spoke, "I hope you guys checked your thrusters because we are dropping from the air."

Walker checked the Prefect's Thrusters, "Prefect, check!"

Grayson checked his Raider's Thrusters, "Raider, check!"

Davenport checked her MJOLNIR Mark V GEN2 thrusters, "Mark V, check!"

Tanner checked his ODST Spartan thrusters, "ODST, check!" Walker began weapons checks; he checked his trusty UNSC Assault Rifle and Forerunner Suppressor, "Check."

Grayson checked his Forerunner Lightrifle and Covenant Carbine, "Check."

Davenport had her SRS99 Sniper Rifle and her Forerunner Binary Rifle, "Check."

Tanner checked his Forerunner Scattershot and UNSC Battle Rifle, "Check and Ready to go."

Walker asked Murphy, "This bird is fitted for full combat pursuit?"

Murphy replied, "Of course, Commander. The Pelican is a stockpile of UNSC equipment on the sides."

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><p>Commander John Shepard was supposed to be on Shore Leave while the Normandy was receiving a retrofit at the Alliance Docks. After being given Admiral David Anderson's Apartment, as well as going through Anderson's history on the data pads until he got a message from Joker to meet him at a Sushi place at Silversun Strip, when he arrives, he meets Staff Analyst Maya Brooks and shortly after learning that someone hacked into his files, a group of mercs show up trying to kill him. He managed to obtain a Suppressed Pistol from a merc that got close to his cover and ordered Joker to go get the rest of the crew.<p>

After the mishap in the restaurant and falling through a fish tank, he made his way to a carport with nothing but a suppressed pistol and ran into his lover, Tali'Zorah vas Normandy. When they reached the carport, she asked a cowering Volus to open up the carport doors to allow a shuttle that the crew was using to come pick them up. That's when the mercs came in and started to fire on them. It was basically a fight to survive this onslaught until they saw one of the mercs take a shot through his chest by an orange light causing the merc to disintegrate before their eyes. They looked up near the open doorway and saw a strange looking dropship with its loading ramp down and saw two figures jump from the ramp, while two others jumped from the rear cockpit. As they descended, the figures were diving like it was a HALO Jump, but when they oriented themselves, thrusters burst from the back of their suits, slowing their descent as they landed on the platform. Shepard and Tali heard one of the new figures, the leader by the looks of him, say,

"Time to bring on the noise on these mercs, Spartans!" The remaining 'Spartans' went, "Hoorah!"

These soldiers went to work on disposing the mercs that decided to turn their guns on the new arrivals; one of the soldiers fired a strange orange glowing weapon on one of the mercs as the soldier filled him with holes. Another brought out, a glowing orange 'shotgun' and fired causing the merc to disintegrate on impact. The next soldier was firing an orange precision based weapon that sported deadly accuracy the orange light tore through the merc's kinetic barrier like it was nothing and another round blew the merc's head clean off. Shepard guessed that the first one who killed the merc was a sniper and if the sniper was that good, then Garrus might have some competition. The two now saw the leader of the soldiers hit his suit's thrusters as he jumped over a merc group while gunning them down with actual bullets from a greyish silver assault rifle. The soldier gestured his squad to form up on him and they began to approach Shepard and Tali.

The soldiers were wearing combat hard suits that don't match any Alliance Standards. While the other soldiers' suits were bulky, the leader wore a smooth armor with a golden visor that could make him look like a Cyclops. The armor looks like that it was made by alien hands, but he didn't have time to think about it right now while there are still mercs around. The leader looked at Shepard and asked,

"Are you all right?" Shepard looked at the soldier's oddly shaped helmet and replied,

"Yeah, I'm fine. Although, I've been bounced around all day when this occurred; But Who are you guys, I don't recognize your armor from anywhere."

The Soldier introduced himself and saluted, "Spartan Commander John Walker of Fireteam Crimson."

The second soldier saluted, "Spartan Corporal Alex Grayson, Number 2 of Fireteam Crimson."

The third saluted with a female voice, "Spartan Sergeant Lucy Davenport, Number 3 of Fireteam Crimson."

The fourth saluted, "Spartan Major Josh Tanner, Number 4 of Fireteam Crimson."

Shepard introduced himself, "Lieutenant Commander John Shepard, Alliance Navy." He introduced Tali, "This is Admiral Tali'Zorah vas Normandy, a valued member of my crew." She nodded as the Spartans nodded until Walker asked, "Alliance Navy?"

A voice came on the radio and was directed to the Spartans, "Spartan Walker, I spotted a shuttle heading for the carport, probable Law Enforcement."

Walker replied, "Murphy, stand-by and keep the Pelican on station until we are ready for extraction. Keep an eye on that shuttle."

Shepard said, "That shuttle is where my crew will arrive in."

Walker ordered Murphy to stand-by while they head for the landing pad for the shuttle to pick them up. Once they reached the shuttle, it was revealed to be more of those mercs. Shepard, Tali and the Spartans got into cover as Grayson saw a window break and a massive alien in red armor landed on the merc shuttle with a heavy thud. This Alien's brute strength remind him too much of the Jiralhanae and judging by its sound and grunts, it's a male. This brute of an alien threw each merc out of the shuttle and over the side into the abyss below. The crippled shuttle landed on the platform, the Spartans noticed the alien approaching Shepard and shook his hand like they were old friends. The alien told them why he was here until he noticed the Spartans,

"Shepard, who are your new friends?"

Shepard replied, "Fireteam Crimson."

Tali added, "Don't worry, Wrex. They're with us."

Wrex replied, "Well, I guess we got four heavy hitters."

Murphy came on the comm, "Walker, I've detected a new shuttle inbound to the carport, I've scanned it this time and there are multiple IFFs, their Friendlies! I've also detected several merc reinforcements inbound on your location."

Walker thought this over and replied, "Murphy, pull the Pelican alongside the carport and open the side weapons doors. We need to

re-arm before they get here."

At that exact moment, the Pelican lowered and landed near the carport, Murphy opened the side doors revealing UNSC weapons, when Murphy lowered the ramp revealing the artifact, there were Forerunner and Covenant Weapons emerging from it.

Walker swapped out his Suppressor with a Covenant Storm Rifle. Grayson swapped his Covenant Carbine for a Forerunner Boltshot. Davenport swapped out her SRS99 with a Covenant Beam Rifle. Tanner swapped his Battle Rifle for a UNSC Pistol. As Walker approached Shepard, he said,

"Those mercs must really want you dead. But if they really want you dead, they are going to have to get through us." He gave Shepard an M739 Light Machine Gun or SAW by most marines, "It's useful for situations like this."

Shepard replied, "Thanks." Wrex approached Walker and said, "Take this." He gave Walker a chaingun sort of weapon, "It's a Geth Spitfire, also useful in situations like this."

Spartan Grayson called Wrex over and gave the Krogan a Railgun, "Someone like you would like to go into battle with this weapon."

Wrex grasped the gun, "I'll put it to good use."

Spartan Davenport called Tali over to her and said, "You are meant for close range weaponry, so you are going to need this." She gave the Quarian a piece of the Scattershot as it assembled itself before her very eyes.

Tali asked, "This is a shotgun?"

Davenport nodded, "It's powerful, but be careful where you fire because it could ricochet off the walls."

As Tali took the Scattershot, she updated her Omni-Tool to create a program for the Scattershot to look for possible ways for a Scattershot's ricocheting ability to be put to good use. She soon joined up with Shepard, Wrex and the Spartans as they prepared themselves for the merc reinforcements. The mercs approached,

"There they are, blast them!" Wrex charged in with his Railgun as he fired a round at the squad, blowing them away in one shot. One of the mercs said,

"Watch out, they've got a Krogan!" That merc was soon cut down by Fireteam Crimson as Walker ordered, "Spartans, go to work until evac arrives. If any of you guys want to provide support with Murphy on the Pelican, climb aboard the side turrets."

Davenport spoke, "I'm on it, Commander." She hopped onto the Pelican's side turrets as Murphy took off and Davenport began providing support.

Shepard got into cover as Spartan Walker said, "Shepard, use the SAW to take out those mercs near those cars. I'll cover you." The Spartan got out of cover and fired his Spitfire at the mercs only to gain

their attention; the mercs took the bait while Shepard popped out of cover and used the SAW to cut down the mercs as they were easily cut down by an array of high speed bullets.

Tali got into cover along with Spartan Tanner as he said, "Use the Scattershot on those mercs in that cover over there."

Tali pointed her Scattershot at the mercs who were stupid enough to raise their head. She used her Scattershot program and found a good ricocheting spot before using her combat drone to lure them out. Once they were out in the open, she fired the Scattershot causing multiple balls of light to hit their targets causing them to disintegrate into orange dust. Wrex caught sight of this and said,

"I've got to get me one of those."

Tali smiled under her helmet as her targets went down, "Got you,"

Spartan Tanner yelled, "Spartan Walker, there's another merc squad!"

Walker replied as he pulled out a blue orb while in cover while Shepard, "Got it covered!"

Shepard asked, "What the hell is that?"

Walker said, "Our little friend!" He activated the orb as he hurled it over to a Merc Sniper. As it latched onto the sniper, she screamed,

"Get it off! Get it off!"

Another Merc said, "It's stuck!"

A third merc yelled, "Then yank it off!" The orb exploded in a flash of blue light turning the merc squad into indiscriminately piles of meat.

Shepard asked, "What was that?"

Walker answered, "It's a Plasma Grenade. It sticks to infantry and it kills instantly. It's useful for a group of soldiers."

Spartan Davenport came on the comm, "The shuttle is arriving and thankfully it's not commandeered by those mercs."

Walker saw a C-sec shuttle that was piloted by Shepard's crew and said, "You heard the lady, everyone onto the shuttle, move!"

* * *

><p>Once everyone was onboard the C-sec shuttle, Joker noticed the massive soldiers that are with Shepard and asked,<p>

"Hey, Commander, who are the hulking soldiers?"

Shepard replied, "This is Fireteam Crimson, a group of Spartans. Although, I have a lot of questions for you four."

Walker sat down and said, "I guess it's time to spill the beans."

Shepard began asking, "What are you, exactly? What species are you?"

Walker answered, "Human, we are human."

Joker commented, "I don't recall humans being that tall."

Shepard asked another question, "What is a Spartan?"

Walker looked at his team until Davenport came on the shuttle's loudspeaker, "Spartans are genetically augmented super-soldiers, developed by Dr. Catherine Elizabeth Halsey to put down human rebellions in the UNSC Outer Colonies."

Shepard asked, "What is the UNSC?"

Tanner spoke, "The UNSC or United Nations Space Command is the military, exploratory and scientific agency of the United Earth Government. The UNSC was formed in the year 2163 and continues on to this day. The product of Space Travel was developed by Tobias Shaw and Wallace Fujikawa in developing the Shaw-Fujikawa Trans light Engine for our starships. Once we were a Space-faring race, the UEG colonized 800 worlds and everything was great. Until the UN was fighting a bloody struggle against groups of terrorist or freedom fighters called 'Insurrectionists' that's when the Spartans came in to crush the Insurrectionists."

Shepard asked, "What year is it right now?"

Spartan Grayson spoke, "Last time we checked, it was the year 2557." Shepard thought to himself, '_Are these guys from the future?_' He responded,

"But it's the year 2186. Although, your stories are interesting."

Grayson realized, "I don't think we are in a right time period, but a different dimension."

Walker nodded, "If the year is 2186, then the UNSC should be going strong."

Shepard nodded, "I guess you five are from a different dimension."

Walker nodded and asked, "So what's your story?"

Shepard began telling Fireteam Crimson his story, his personal history on how he was a Spacer kid, raised on one ship after another. He discovered his biotic powers, after explaining what biotics are to the Spartans, enlisted and saved the Alliance colony of Elysium during the Skyllian Blitz. He recalled how he encountered a Prothean Beacon that gave him the warning about the Reapers although no one believed him which disgusted the Spartans. Then he told them about his journeys while hunting down the Rogue Spectre Agent, Saren Arterius and blowing up half a dozen of the Heretic Geth. Then came with dealing with the Reaper Sovereign, he order the Alliance Fleet

to save the Council and the Dreadnought, Destiny Ascension at all costs. After telling the Spartans on the first half of the story, he told them the part of how he died and was brought back to life by Cerberus, a pro-human organization. He told him the story all the way to the Destruction of the Alpha Relay. Shepard began telling the Spartans what happened after returning to Earth, he spoke of the Reaper Attack all the way down to the Shore Leave where they first meet. Spartan Walker commented,

"Even after all of your warnings, the Council refused to take action to prepare for the Reapers? If we were here earlier, we wouldn't let the Council sit on their asses all day and pretend that nothing has gone wrong."

Shepard replied, "Until hell shows up at their door."

Spartan Davenport spoke over the comm, "Hell showed up at our door in the year 2525 when the Covenant glassed Harvest."

Tali asked, "Covenant?"

Spartan Grayson spoke, "The Covenant was a collective empire who believed that humans are a blight on the galaxy because their Prophets lied to them because humans are the inheritors to the machines of their gods, the Forerunners."

Spartan Walker noted, "To be out in the open, the armor I'm wearing is actually a hybridization of Human and Forerunner engineering."

Tali said, "I bet Liara will be jumping about your armor."

Walker asked, "Who's Liara, and by the sound of that name it sounds very beautiful for a beautiful woman."

Tali replied, "Liara T'soni is an Asari Scientist who specializes in the Protheans and now we have the last one on our crew. But when she finds out about another advanced civilization and judging by your armor, she would be bouncing."

Lieutenant Murphy asked over the comm, "Why do I get the feeling that the Protheans and the Forerunners are similar?"

Walker replied, "Because they were both wiped out by a parasite, Murphy. Although, the Flood fought the Forerunners until the firing of the Halo Array wiping out all sentient life in the galaxy; the Librarian indexed our species for repopulation along with the Covenant Races. These Protheans were fighting parasitic machines that were hell bent on harvesting them to create more of these Reapers. But they didn't have a Halo Array."

Shepard asked, "Can your pilot follow us?"

Murphy replied, "Yeah, I can. I've flown a Phantom before, I can follow your shuttle to the rendezvous, and IFF tag was already placed on your shuttle." Murphy forgot something, "By the way, my name is Lieutenant TJ Murphy, UNSC Marine Corps."

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><p>As they left for the rendezvous, a speck of computerized dust that came from the Forerunner artifact began to form into something that would end up following Fireteam Crimson. Its computerized data began to shifting into an advanced combat AI that Crimson has faced dozens of times on Requiem. Once its body formed, it took a look around and spotted the Kodiak and the Pelican. It opened its face revealing its Orange mimetic skull; it started to sniff out something familiar. It was sniffing out Forerunner tech and its getting away from the creature. It screeched as it closed its face and teleported after the Kodiak and the Pelican.<p>

So this has been chapter two where Walker and Fireteam Crimson meet Commander Shepard and save him from a bunch of mercs.

Yes, I'm going through with the Citadel DLC. But it will be a while since my Xbox Hard drive got fried. Now I have to start all over again. But I assure you my fellow readers. I WILL GET THIS DONE!

You guys already know what's starting to hunt them. You guys stick around while I plan a Spartan's way of infiltrating a charity party.

3. That's some security for a Casino

Chapter 3: That's some security for a Casino

After the rescue at the Carport, Commander Shepard and Fireteam Crimson landed in Silversun Strip, the place where Shepard was ambushed. Shepard was going to open the shuttle door when he asked,

"How are you guys going to move about the strip?"

Spartan John Walker replied, "Our armor is equipped with an Active Camo module, we can cloak and follow you to your apartment."

Joker asked, "But what about your pilot and your 'Pelican' ship?"

They heard a knock from outside the shuttle as Murphy came on the comm, "I've put the Pelican on lockdown only to operate by me and the Spartans. As for me, I guess I can pass off as a normal marine, because I am a marine."

Spartan Walker nodded and said, "Spartans, time to disappear." All Spartans began to fade from existence, but that was a benefit of the Active Camo. Shepard told the Spartans,

"Follow me until we reach the apartment, the others are waiting."

The shuttle door opened to Lieutenant TJ Murphy, the guy who was flying the Pelican. He was just as they expected him to be, a marine with some flight experience. So Joker began to have a talk with Murphy,

"How did you end up being with these guys in your world?"

Murphy replied, "My squad and I were on a mission to the Shield World Requiem. We were on a mission until the Covenant or what's left of the former Covenant captured my squad. While we were guarded by Covenant troops and Promethean Crawlers, we heard fighting and multiple Covenant forces dying. That's when our Promethean guards fell to the onslaught, and when the dust settled, I see Commander Walker and Fireteam Crimson here to rescue us."

Joker asked, "What's a Promethean?"

Murphy replied, "A Promethean is an advanced combat Forerunner AI construct native to Requiem, similar to Forerunner Sentinels but those were just drones. Prometheans responded to the Didact, the Forerunner who has an axe to grind with our humanity."

Joker asked, "What did he do?"

Murphy replied, "The Didact brought his huge ship that was buried on Requiem to our Earth and fired a weapon called 'The Composer' at New Phoenix. He would've nearly succeeded in his so-called kindness to humanity, but then the Master Chief got aboard his ship carrying a HAVOC-Nuke. He defeated the Didact and destroyed his ship and the Composer in the process. But from what I heard, his AI companion, Cortana sacrificed herself so he could live."

Joker asked, "What type of Spartan was this Master Chief?"

Murphy remembered, "He's a Spartan-II, one of the original Spartans created by Dr. Halsey. Spartan Walker idolizes the Master Chief because of what he did to save our earth."

Tali overheard their conversation and asked, "Why would he mourn an AI?"

Murphy spoke, "Because Cortana has been the Chief's most trusted companion for eight years and she was at the end of her seven year cycle. The Chief told me about what he originally planned to do once he got a ride back to Earth."

Tali asked, "What were his plans"

Murphy finished, "He wanted to return to Earth, find Halsey because she made Cortana, and she could fix her. He trusts her as much as he trusts the members of Spartan Blue Team, his original Spartan unit."

Joker asked, "Is that possible?"

Murphy remembered, "Before the Chief and Cortana departed Infinity on a Pelican to go after the Didact, Cortana told me that she was created through living tissue; a Clone of Dr. Halsey."

Their conversation proceeded on and on while unaware that a Watcher was watching and seeing where they were going, but retreated with a risk of being spotted.

Fireteam Crimson was gathering data on the various species that passed by them while invisible. They noted several species that Shepard told them about. The Asari, who look like human females except they are blue, and have tentacle heads. Walker was informed

that they are a mono-gendered species and reproduce through telepathy. Grayson noticed a few of the Turians who look like Sangheili but they have a more avian appearance instead of the saurian appearance that the Sangheili have. Davenport noticed a few of the Salarians who were mostly intelligent and bounce at the sight of new technology. She was also informed about the Salarian Special Tasks Group and knew that as fragile as they look on the outside, she was getting a feeling that she can't underestimate a Salarian if she fought one. Tanner was passing by a Hanar that makes him feel equally annoyed by it always referring to itself in third person. He would rather feel the tentacles of a Huragok fixing his armor than listen to a Hanar talk.

When they reached the elevator to Shepard's apartment, he said, "You guys can come out now."

The Spartans de-cloaked and were now on their way up to the apartment. Walker asked,

"So this leads to your apartment?"

Shepard replied, "This was originally Admiral Anderson's Apartment, but since he's fighting the Reapers back on Earth, he gave the apartment to me." He realized, "Speaking of apartments, three years ago, I won an Apartment on Inta'sei for beating Admiral Ahern's survival challenge. I haven't checked on it in the past three years."

Walker replied, "Maybe we'll see that it's still safe."

Shepard asked, "Are you asking to join us?"

Grayson spoke, "Why not, there are only five of us in our UNSC group, plus we've got that Pelican waiting outside."

Davenport stepped in, "You also mentioned that you're best friend is a good sniper. I would put my expertise on sniping to the limit against his."

Before Shepard made his decision, he asked Davenport, "What was that weapon you used to take out that merc?"

Davenport smiled as she brought out a piece of her sniper rifle and it assembled by itself, "This is my Binary Rifle, it was used by Promethean Knights, in fact I pried this one off a Knight Commander as he attempted to shoot Tanner. I took out his inner arms, grabbed his Watcher and used its Boltshot to kill every Promethean in my way. I kept the Binary Rifle to remind me of what happened."

Shepard decided, "Thanks for your story and once we're done with who tried to kill me, I could use Fireteam Crimson on the Normandy."

Walker let Davenport say, "Thank you, Commander."

Tanner pointed out from her story, "I would've been a pile of digitized dust if not for you."

Davenport turned to Tanner, "It was pure skill that made me yank the Knight away from you."

Shepard asked Walker, "Are those two always like this?"

Walker stated, "Lucy and Josh were never intimate, she treats Josh like a brother. Sometimes she teases me about attempting to make a pass a Commander Sarah Palmer, but basically she wasn't my type."

Shepard asked, "What would you usually prefer?"

Walker shrugged, "Scientists, they are smart and I knew some scientists who took it upon themselves to wield guns to defend themselves."

Shepard realized, "Now I understand."

* * *

><p>As they arrived at Shepard's Apartment, the Spartans looked around the place and noticed how peaceful it seems to be, while they were observing the apartment, they overheard Shepard talking about calling someone named, Bailey. That woman, Maya Brooks denied that because the mercs could target Bailey as well. Spartan Grayson went over and asked,<p>

"How are these mercenaries involved? Even though we just got here?" Brooks explains about her program that she created to track officer IDs and frauds. After listening to the results, Walker went over and said,

"Someone is hacking into Shepard's records and files?"

Wrex butted in and said, "Since when does hacking involve heavy weaponry? No offense, but I like the Railgun."

Walker pointed out, "When we spotted you from our Pelican, you were holding that pistol. Where did you get it?"

Shepard pulled out the M-11 Suppressor, "I got it from a merc."

Wrex looked at the pistol, "I've never seen anything like it, but it packs a punch for something that small."

At that moment, the door opened which made Walker turn his head towards the door and what he saw nearly made his Prefect visor change color. He saw a holographic drone enter along with a beautiful Asari scientist; Walker had a feeling in his gut that this was Liara T'soni, but it was those ocean blue eyes that got to the Spartan. When he saw her eyes, he instantly got lost in them. But Walker saw the look on her face that she was surprised to find his Fireteam in the apartment.

Shepard realized this and said, "Liara, We forgot to mention about these five."

Liara asked, "Shepard, who are they?"

Tali walked over to the Asari, "This is Fireteam Crimson, they are Spartans and they are not from around here, as well as their pilot."

Walker snapped out of his love-struck trance and stepped in, "Dr. T'soni, I'm John Walker, Crimson's leader." He pointed to his squadmates, "That's Alex Grayson, Crimson 2, Lucy Davenport and Josh Tanner, 3 and 4." He pointed to Murphy, "That's Lieutenant TJ Murphy, Crimson's pilot."

Murphy nodded, "Ma'am."

The drone, Glyph appears, "I have been compiling files on the weapon and results should be momentarily."

Grayson crossed his arms, "My guess by the drones personality traits; it's a 'Dumb' AI."

Joker said, "Right, because our normal VIs have the same thing as your UNSC Dumb AIs."

Walker watched as Liara left for the other room as Davenport tapped him on the shoulder, "What?"

The sniper replied, "You like the scientist, John."

Walker asked, "What makes you say that?"

"I saw the way you looked at her, although our faces are obscured by the helmets. I read your head movements."

Walker helmet-palmed, "Lucy, you and your special trait."

The rest of Shepard's crew arrives as she spots the Turian Sniper that Shepard mentioned. She went over and introduced herself to Garrus Vakarian, even removing her Mark V helmet revealing her brown hair in a bun and green eyes to the Turian. While Walker went over to the bar in the living room, he noticed Shepard approaching him and said,

"Shepard, Tali told Liara that my team isn't from around here."

Shepard nodded, "With the mingling going on with your team, its certain she'll find out. Liara is good at listening to others while working."

Walker replied, "Nice."

Shepard noticed that he still had his Prefect helmet on, "Are you going to take off your helmet?"

Walker chuckled, "I've had it on long enough." With an instant, Walker pressed a button which caused his helmet to unseal as he removed the Prefect helmet. Shepard was in awe about this soldier, the Spartan's face was a bit Caucasian with his hair in a shortened length of brown. Walker's eyes were a mix blue color and had a scar running near his left eye. He could know about a ton of women who would complement on the Spartan's face.

Shepard said, "How long have you been wearing that helmet?"

Walker replied, "Since I first got it, it's been a part of me

throughout the Requiem Campaign." Walker began to ask,

"So, what have you been doing since we got back?"

Shepard replied, "I talked to my Quarian Girlfriend, Tali, who wasn't happy with the damage I caused at the Sushi restaurant. That restaurant was an old memory from her pilgrimage, her rite of passage into adulthood."

Walker said, "Don't breathe the word of sushi to Tanner; he won't be able to control himself."

Shepard nodded, "Noted. I also saw Davenport talking with Garrus and she showed him that Binary Rifle and he commented saying, 'How come I don't have one of those?'"

Walker chuckled, "I guess we'll be getting that question a lot, while we're here."

Shepard nodded, "Keep a lookout."

Walker said, "Shepard, you know that four-eyed guy, Javik?"

Shepard asked, "Is there anything about Javik that's bothering you?"

Walker spoke, "Javik has the strength of a soldier, but his attitude suggested that his 'embodiment of vengeance' is urged to ending the Reapers forever."

Shepard looked at the two Spartans on the upper level along with the Prothean, the Turian and the Krogan, one Spartan has black hair, brown eyes and dark skin as he replied,

"He's always been like that. If there is any chance we might get him to lighten up, he might be open a little."

Shepard got up from the bar and went over to where Murphy is, as the Marine was chatting with Joker and Lieutenant Steve Cortez, Cortez commented,

"You stole an alien gunship back in your world?"

Murphy replied, "With Crimson's help, of course. It's because of the Spartans that we've made it this far."

Joker asked, "How did you end up flying a Pelican?" Murphy answered, "There was an attack on UNSC Infinity and we had to return to Infinity. We got hit and crashed into Infinity's hanger on landing. I was lucky to have survived. After the attack was repelled, I was assigned as Crimson's pilot and was given a Pelican, fitted for full combat pursuit." Murphy noticed Shepard,

"I take you had a talk with Romeo in the other room."

Shepard nodded, "I did, and maybe after this is over, we can finally get the shore leave that we deserve." He looked at Walker in the living room and at Liara checking on the results of Glyph's scans,

"And he might just explain his Forerunner Hybrid armor to Liara."

Spartan Tanner was sitting on a chair, helmetless revealing his dirty-blond hair with green eyes and light skin,

"The Commander was always into female scientists, alien types to be precise."

Shepard nodded to Tanner's comment about Walker's interests; he couldn't blame any of them either. He went to talk to Liara about the results of the M-11 Suppressor, and she said that she had something. She called in a few favors and her findings lead to a casino owner named, Elijah Khan and was suspected of using his money to smuggle weapons onto the Citadel. Walker came in holding his Prefect helmet at his side saying,

"So, we're tracking down a Smuggler and a Casino owner?"

Liara replied to the Spartan, "Yes and there was an interesting call from the buyer to Khan after the failed assassination. The buyer even mentioned the mercs that survived have mentioned your Spartan team."

Shepard spoke, "We have our ID Thief and a possible lead, and we have to get to Khan."

Tanner showed up about say it in a more dramatic way until Walker said, "Say it and you will be waiting with the artifact on the Pelican!"

Liara asked, "Artifact?"

Tanner spoke, "That's for later; let's focus on who these mercenaries are."

Liara apologized and said, "They come from an organization called 'CAT6' its slang for soldiers who were dishonorably discharged from the Systems Alliance."

Grayson joined, "Right, this universe's term for the UNSC, and I guess these CAT6 Mercenaries strongly hate the Alliance."

Walker told his number 2, "One problem at a time." He turned to the others, "How do we get to Khan?"

They explained how Khan has a panic room in the back of the Silver Coast Casino, but it was guarded by security cameras. It wasn't going to be an easy swing by and question Khan. Liara came up with a plan to infiltrate the casino and question Khan about the gun's buyer. Shepard decided to have a small team where there will be no gunplay, and to focus solely on stealth. Walker said,

"My Spartans and I can use our Active Camo modules, to infiltrate the Casino. We'll be in a secluded area, but if we see any guards, we'll deal with them. Non-lethal takedowns only."

Glyph informs the team, "They are using the Casino for a charity event for War Refugees." Glyph put Shepard and a plus one forward.

Liara looked at the event, "There is one problem." Shepard asked, "And that is?"

Liara finished, "Black tie required." Tanner muttered, "Damn it."

* * *

><p>Meanwhile at the Silver Coast Casino, the Promethean saw the results from his Watcher saying that five reclaimers are in this new universe. Although he could still hear the Didact's voice, the Forerunner's control over him ceased after the Reclaimer wearing the advanced Combat Skin killed him near the artifact. The Promethean Knight was standing in the shadows gazing at what looked like some sort of event. The Knight went through his memory and found out through various sources that it's a charity event for war refugees. The Knight noticed a couple of humans, but none matches Reclaimer status, as well as a few new species that he found. The Knight wanted to send out a Watcher, but there are guards all over the place. If they spot the Watcher, they would report suspicious activity and he would have to recall the Watcher. The Knight decided to have another crazy idea; he had to time his movement with the nearby guard to get into position.<p>

As the guard leaves, the Knight got into a position that the guard used to be in and froze completely as the guard returned,

"That's funny; I don't remember Mr. Khan having a statue in the casino. Although it might look a littleâ€¦intimidating, and it looks big."

The guard thought about for a second and decided to just dismiss the Knight as a Statue and stood by it. The Knight used his Promethean Vision to see things that others cannot, and he spotted four Reclaimer signatures walking around the casino. The Knight turned off his Promethean vision and saw that the Reclaimers were using Active Camo to get through undetected, while accompanied by a group of three, two humans, male and female and a female alien with the same environment suit that his Watcher spotted with the fifth Reclaimer earlier. That's when he noticed the group approaching him and he acted like a normal statue, even cutting off his eye lights. He heard the male human ask the guard near him,

"Excuse me, I noticed this statue next to you. Is there anything important about this statue?"

The guard replied, "I don't remember seeing this statue, but I get the feeling that it might be alive."

The Promethean heard the female in the environment suit whisper, "Shepard, this statue has the same description of one of the Prometheans that the Spartans and their pilot were talking about."

The Knight was surprised that the Reclaimers told them about the other Prometheans. He was curious about why they were in the casino with four cloaked Reclaimers. So he decided to launch a Stealth Watcher equipped with Active Camo and Promethean Vision. After they left and the guard left his post, the Knight crouched as his back opened up revealing a Watcher that sported a blue glow to it. The

Promethean realized this when he looked at his reflection on the reflective floor, his orange blazing eyes turned into a calm hue of blue, like he was when the Librarian calmed the Promethean's anger.

The Watcher cloaked and activated Promethean Vision to follow the group that approached the Knight. It deactivated Promethean Vision and found the group by a grate on the upper level, it noticed that one of them is going to enter the grate and disable security, but the only setback is that the grate is rigged with an alarm. The Watcher de-cloaked and fired a blue beam at the grate catching the group's attention as Spartan Walker de-cloaked. Shepard asked,

"What is that?"

Walker recognized it, "That's a Promethean Watcher; it's used by the Knights to serve as combat engineers. They revive fallen knights, set up turrets, redirect thrown grenades, and place a Hard-Light shield to protect any Knights or Crawlers. But this one seems friendlier than the ones the four of us fought before."

Brooks looked at the Promethean, "What is it doing?"

Grayson de-cloaked, "It's scanning the alarm grate and looking for a way to disable it. Watchers are capable of scanning a priority objective and finding solutions."

The Watcher's rings folded into vertical position in the back of the Promethean as it cloaked and flew to the other side of the upper level. After a few seconds, Brooks scanned the grate with her omni-tool and discovered that the alarm is offline,

"I guess our little friend helped us out."

Davenport said over the comm as Walker and Grayson cloaked, _"A lone Promethean Watcher helping us out? That's unheard of before."_

Shepard contacted Liara, "Liara, infiltration is proceeding as planned, but we ran into an old friend of the Spartans."

Liara asked, _"What old friend are you talking about?"_

Shepard replied, "We were assisted by a Promethean Watcher as the Spartans called it. It has the ability to cloak itself; it scanned the grate and found a junction box to shut off the alarm."

Liara was shocked, _"So, it's helping you get to Khan."_ She now contacted the Spartans, _"Spartans, see you can find the Watcher to know what it's doing."_

Walker replied, _"Roger that, Liara. Crimson going to observation position."_

The Watcher ascended as it watched the woman in the blue dress crawl into the vent. It kept its sights on the human and the alien that the data received from the Knight a few seconds ago called it a 'Quarian.' The Watcher hacked into communications between the two and woman in the vent as it scanned it and noticed pressure pads inside the shaft and there are junction boxes to shut them down. Thanks to

its Active Camo, it was able to deactivate the junction boxes without attracting any attention before the woman in the shaft encounters the pressure pads. The Watcher heard communications between Shepard and Brooks saying that there's a guard beneath her. The Watcher watched as Shepard approached the guard and said that there is a Red Sand user in the bathroom, the guard moves to confront the situation. The Watcher saw as its Knight Companion teleported out of the casino while the guard was not looking. The Watcher heard Brooks over the comm saying,

"_Shepard, I'm noticing some pressure pads, but they seem to be offline."_

Shepard replied, "I guess that Watcher is watching over us."

Tali looked over by that wall where they saw the statue, "Shepard, That statue we saw earlier disappeared."

EDI, the AI came on the comm, "_Shepard, I have detected some abnormalities when you saw that statue. If my calculations are correct, as well as the Spartans encounters, the statue is actually a Promethean."_

Tanner spoke, "_Oh, great, now our day is complete."_

Walker told Tanner, "_Remember that Watcher we saw earlier?"_

Tanner explained, "_A Watcher is enough, but a freaking Knight is another. I've seen enough of those Knights on Requiem, one even tried to kill me!"_

Davenport spoke, "_Maybe this Knight is different."_

Grayson added, "_If the Knight was hostile, then its Watcher would've killed us when it saw us."_

Brooks came on the comm saying that she reached the panic room, but she missed one of the security measures and a guard is heading to her position, Shepard ordered,

"Spartans, knock the guard out nice and quietly."

Walker and Fireteam Crimson moved towards the guard as he was approaching Brooks' position. Walker noticed two guards in the room and Walker ordered,

"_Davenport, Tanner, knock out those two guards in that room, so we won't raise the alarm."_ Two green lights winked as Davenport and Tanner moved into the other room. Walker synchronized the time to strike with the other two Spartans to take out the three guards as Grayson moved in to deactivate the camera. Walker counted down,

"_3, 2, 1, Now!"_ Grayson deactivated the camera as Walker, Davenport and Tanner had all three guards in a choke hold until they passed out. The Spartans placed the unconscious guards on a nearby couch to look like they were sitting down. They also noticed the Watcher de-cloak and deactivate the last camera. Walker and his team de-cloaked and contacted Brooks,

"Crimson to Brooks, all clear, I repeat, all clear."

Brook replied, _"Thanks, Spartans. You bought me some time to hack the door."_

Shepard and Tali looked at the unconscious guards as Shepard spoke, "Nice work, Spartans." They saw the Watcher disappear and leave the Casino as they progressed to Khan's office to question him.

When they entered Khan's office, the Spartans de-cloaked as Shepard said,

"Khan, you and me are going to have a talk." Walker went over to Khan's desk and said, "Commanderâ€|" He turned the chair around, "CAT6 got to him first."

Tali folded her arms, "Well, this is inconvenient."

Brooks looked at Khan's terminal, "Commander, there's a deletion order on the terminal."

Tanner spoke, "Well, we lost our only leads to the ID Thief."

Brooks said, "I don't know if it was him or the killerâ€|when I tripped that alarm, did I screw this up?" She noticed Shepard going through the terminal, "What are you looking for?"

Shepard replied, "Mistakes." He noticed a saved comm file, "Whoever did this had to do it fast. They wiped the terminal, but there is a saved comm file."

Grayson felt signs of a Watcher being in here, "Commander, I think that our 'little friend' came in here through the ducts, found Khan dead and saved a comm file for us."

Shepard replied, "Since it helped us, I'm beginning to trust it."

Brooks realized, "So we can take the comm that the Watcher saved, back to the safehouse and scan it orâ€|"

The screen behind them turned on to reveal a fuzzy image of a mysterious figure, Walker turned around,

"Commanderâ€|" Shepard turned around and saw the mysterious figure as it said, _"Elijah come crawling back?"_

Shepard replied, "Guess again."

The Mysterious Figure noticed, _"You? I see you've recovered from flopping on the floor like a fish." _He noticed the Spartans, _"And I see that the mysterious soldiers are with you as well."_

Shepard spoke, "You have to try better than that. The last guy who tried to trash-talk me was a few kilometers taller."

The figure replied, _"Brave, not as much, but it won't matter. You have nothing; all you can do is wait for the hammer to fall."_

Walker stepped in, "Are you that serious?"

The figure said, _"What?"_

Walker continued, "You say that Shepard has nothing and tell him to wait for the hammer to fall on him?"

Grayson stepped in, "The Commander has something, he has a strong crew, a strong ship and he has us."

Davenport added, "And look at yourself, you steal Shepard's Identity and order a hit on him so you can steal his life? Not happening on our account!"

Tanner finished, "I hope you watch your surroundings, because Spartan Fireteam Crimson will be all over you when we find you!"

Shepard looked at how the Spartans intimidated the Mysterious Figure and asked, "Why are you doing this?"

The Figure ended his transmission saying, _"I'm going to take everything you have and everything you are. As for your Spartans, I would personally see them dead."_

Walker replied, "Try us, Coward!" The figure cut transmission before Brooks could trace the call. Shepard spoke,

"Spartan Grayson, Pull out the data drives that the Watcher left us."

Grayson grabbed the data drives and handed them to Shepard as Brooks asked, "You think we can find something?"

Shepard replied, "With EDI anything is possible."

Walker added, "We should also find out why there was a Promethean Knight here, and why did the Watcher help us rather than attack us."

****So that's chapter 3, and there is the presence of a Promethean Knight in this story. ****

****Why did the Watcher help the squad rather than attack them? Well, we'll find out later.****

****Next up is the assault on the archives as well as Teams Mako and Hammerhead get a first glance on how a Promethean Knight fights.****

4. Knighttime and Spartan Time

****I was busy reconstructing my Mass Effect 2 data until I ended with Arrival. I'm starting to reconstruct Mass Effect 3 (finally) my memories with the Citadel DLC came back to me after a few plays on Multiplayer and a brief moment on the Campaign. (I also needed a Halo 4 break after Mass Effect 2)****

****So in this chapter, it's the aftermath of the previous mission and the histories of the Spartans Universe. Soon after that, it would be a battle in the Citadel Archives and the Promethean Knight joins the**

party.**

Chapter 4 Knighttime and Spartan Time

After the infiltration of the Casino and the unexpected death of their only lead, Commander Shepard and Fireteam Crimson returned to the apartment to have EDI scan the data drives that the Promethean Watcher left behind. As they re-entered the apartment, the four Spartans de-cloaked as Tali commented,

"That was fun, except for the murder."

Spartan Walker turned to the Quarian, "There was also the Promethean Knight and Watcher that assisted us."

Spartan Davenport spoke, "The Knight that helped us rather than killing us."

Shepard stepped in, "You told us about this Knight and the statue had a very good description."

Spartan Tanner pulled out a holographic display of a Promethean Knight and Watcher, "We sometimes see them either side by side or on their own. And we've never seen a Watcher with a color of blue before."

Spartan Grayson looked at the data drives and the display and replied, "Let's hope that what the Watcher left behind is solid." He went to give the drives to EDI as the others went to pass the time talking to each other.

Walker removed his helmet and sat on a nearby couch as he noticed Liara approaching him, he guessed, "You want to know about the artifact I mentioned?"

Liara replied as she sat next to him, "Yes, the artifact you mentioned before, what is it?" The Spartan looked at the Asari, "The artifact we have with us came from the Forerunner Shield World, Requiem back in our universe, and it was used as a Slipspace anchor for our ship, UNSC Infinity."

Liara replied, "And it brought you here?"

Walker nodded as he spoke, "The Artifact was in our Pelican as we were returning to Infinity to escape Requiem as it was hurling towards the sun. The Artifact had an energy reading that merged with my suit causing a Slipspace rupture that sent our Pelican to the Citadel and us along with it."

Liara asked, "The armor you possess, it looks more advanced than any others, even than ancient Prothean armors I found at dig sites."

Walker described his armor, "It's called the 'Prefect' armor, a hybrid of both human and Forerunner technologies, designed with a special shielding system that surpasses the Kinetic Barriers of this universe. It's equipped with a permanent Overshield system that covers my golden Plasma Shielding system, a Hard-light shield that I could use in battle, Promethean Vision that makes me see what others can't, and a built-in thruster pack to slow my fall."

Liara asked, "Did the Forerunners build a similar armor?"

Walker smiled, "They did, and they call it a Combat Skin." The Spartan told the Asari scientist about the Forerunners, what they are, their belief in 'The Mantle of Responsibility' and the two most notable Forerunners that they know of.

"The Didact is the Commander of the Forerunner Military and he hates humans because of what my people did, a hundred thousand years ago in my universe."

Liara asked, "What did the humans do, a hundred thousand years ago?"

Walker took a deep breath, "The advanced ancient humans spread across the stars in a desperate violence until the Didact's Warrior-Servants as I could tell from the terminals that was shown by the Master Chief, were the original Prometheans, rose up to halt the aggression. When he exhausted the humans, he stripped them of being an advanced species causing them to start over."

Liara asked, "He dissolved all technology from the humans?"

Walker nodded, "When he discovered from his wife, The Librarian that the humans were running from a parasitic lifeform called 'The Flood' The Didact said that Humanity took the Mantle of Responsibility into their own hands and now the Forerunners had to deal with this parasite."

Liara asked, "The Librarian, who is she?"

Walker pondered his memory from those videos, "The Librarian is a Forerunner Lifeshaper and Wife of the Didact. She was more compassionate about Humanity after seeing them at peace on Omega Halo; she wanted Humanity to rise again better than before. She and the other Forerunners had plans to stop the Flood which would lead to the ultimate sacrifice."

The scientist asked curiously, "What were they planning?"

The Spartan answered, "They were planning the Halo Array, seven ring installations that would simultaneously fire, wiping out the Flood as well as all sentient life in the galaxy." The Asari was shocked at such a terrifying weapon until the Spartan calmed her down by saying, "But the Librarian was already thinking ahead to save the other species of the galaxy. She indexed every species, Human, Sangheili, all those beings in my home galaxy were indexed for repopulation."

Liara calmed down and asked, "Did her husband agree to this plan?"

Walker answered, "Her husband had other plans on how to deal with the Flood. He experimented on himself to gain immunity from Flood Infection which ended in failure. One of the Prometheans recommended using the Composer, a weapon that bridges the Organic and Digital realms that would've made the Forerunners immortal. Although it did not work on his new form, He used the Composer on his Promethean

Warrior-Servants to turn them into Promethean Knights because the Flood only infected living organic tissue."

Liara was shocked about the Composer, "The Composer turns organics into AI constructs?" The Spartan nodded knowing that the weapon would catch anyone of this universe by surprise, "The Composer turned the Didact's Warrior-Servants into Knights for his army to fight the Flood. But they lacked in moral values and the Didact needed more Knights for his army. So he chose to kill two birds in one stone. He would punish Humanity for their crimes during the Forerunner-Human War and encrypt the entire Human Population on Omega Halo to defeat the Flood."

Liara asked in a shocked tone, "He killed a Human population on one of the rings. Didn't the Librarian stop him?"

Walker replied, "The Librarian was furious at what her husband was doing, she ordered her Lifeworkers to get the other humans to safety while she goes to stop her husband's madness. She journeyed to his ship and incapacitated the Didact using a Binary Rifle which she set to stun. After stopping her husband's madness, she wanted the Didact to know that their time as the Galaxy's caretakers has come to an end, she removed the Composer from the Didact's care, hid it on Halo Installation 03 as for her husband, she imprisoned him on Requiem in meditation. She would hope that when her husband awakes, he would find the humans and help them learn from their mistakes as well as the humans teaching the Didact. As for his Knights, she calmed them down and ceased the Didact's control over them. In the days to come, the Halos fired, wiping out the Flood as well as all sentient life in the Galaxy. The Indexes opened up and my home galaxy breathed and grew with life as the galaxy rebuilt itself. The Forerunners paid the Ultimate Sacrifice to save the Galaxy."

Liara was amazed at such a story that the Spartan-IV has told her. A similar race to the Protheans and how they were wiped out by a parasitic lifeform, but the Protheans were wiped out by the Reapers as the Spartan compared them as a giant mechanical version of the Flood, the Prothean Expert saw the similarities.

The other Spartans were chatting about what happened at the party. James Vega said to Spartan Josh Tanner,

"Damn, a party is just some military operation to you Spartans."

Tanner replied to the Lieutenant, "We were trained to be the best when we were marines."

James asked, "How do you guys become Spartans?" Tanner shrugged, "We were augmented to wear this armor."

He said in surprise, "Wait, Augmented? As in you guys are genetically modified?"

The Spartan answered, "We are genetically modified to wear this armor. If an unaugmented person wore it, the armor would crush the wearer to critically injured or death. If an augmented person wore this armor, the wearer would be able to withstand its effects."

James asked, "What is special about it?"

Tanner replied, "It's called the MJOLNIR Powered Assault Armor, it's a battle suit that only Spartans wear to increase their strength and agility."

James asked, "How often were Spartans created because I want to know if your UNSC requires these Super-Soldiers, Loco."

Tanner recalled the history of the SPARTAN-II Program and the SPARTAN-III Program to James as he learned about the Super-Soldiers that were created as a major role and the Super-Soldiers that were meant to be expendable. Then Tanner told James about the SPARTAN-IV Program and how different that it was to the IIs and the IIIs. James asked,

"They used children to become Super-Soldiers in the SPARTAN-II and SPARTAN-III Program?"

Tanner nodded and said, "And the parents never knew about their child's abduction, because the abducted child was replaced by a Flash Clone that is set to die in a few months."

James spoke, "They even have cloning in your universe? This Office of Naval Intelligence is sneaky."

Tanner finished, "And a single Spartan-II managed to defeat the Covenant."

James remembered, "Right, this Master Chief guy, your Commander was talking about. He was one of those Spartan abductees, right?" The Spartan-IV nodded as James finished, "You guys really are Super-Soldiers. By the way, is there any chow around here?"

Spartan Grayson went over to Urdnot Wrex as the Krogan asked, "Why didn't I go with you guys? Didn't have an extra Camo module for me?"

Grayson replied, "It would be more of a stealth mission when we don't have something big to run into people while invisible. It would give us away too easily and we would have to battle the guards."

Wrex folded his arms, "You're a strategist?" The Spartan nodded, "I'm a strategist, Tech Expert and Commander Walker's closest friend."

The Krogan spoke, "But the three of you fought three guards while you disabled the camera."

Grayson stated, "Walker, Davenport and Tanner knocked out the three guards silently as I disabled the camera. I saw that Watcher disable the other camera after I disabled the first one."

Wrex realized, "You Spartans are starting to get concerned about this Promethean's presence."

Grayson replied, "I know, it's just that the Prometheans are hostile, but this one isn't and its Watcher didn't attack us. But it somehow followed us here."

Wrex spoke, "I looked at the Knight's size when EDI reported it. I have to say, these Knights are about the size of my people maybe even larger."

Grayson nodded, "They are larger than Spartan-IIs and when the Knights die, they disintegrate like the impact of a Scattershot or Binary Rifle. But if they die from any weapon, they disintegrate."

Wrex remembered, "Scattershot, that shotgun that Tali had?"

Grayson brought a piece of the gun and gave it to Wrex, "Wait a momentâ€¦" The gun assembled by itself. Grayson warned, "But don't fire it inside the apartment, I bet Commander Shepard won't like it."

Wrex looked at Grayson, "I know Shepard too well to know that he wouldn't like a firefight in his own apartment."

Grayson shifted his focus on the Knight's presence, "All in all, the Knight did help us. This would make it a potential ally with its fighting skills and its Watcher's assistance."

Javik walked up to the Spartan and the Krogan and said, "Whether the Knight helped you or not, it is still considered to be a machine. I would shoot it if I was there."

Grayson looked at the Prothean, "Many Forerunner AIs went rampant after a hundred thousand years, but unlike the other Knights. The one we encountered had a blue glow to it rather than orange. The UNSC even developed AIs to help coordinate with the ship captains in combat, Spartans have a neural interface that allows a Shipboard AI to coordinate with the Spartan. No one can call us 'primitive' if we mastered a way to create our AIs."

Javik responded, "You may be from another universe, human. But don't question what I am saying; you haven't seen what my kind faced before the Reapers came. We feared machine intelligence surpassing us until the Reapers arrived. That's when we found out that machines surpassed us long ago."

Grayson replied comparing the Reapers to the Flood, "Your kind fought the Reapers, but failed to stop the parasitic machines."

Javik smiled at the Spartan's description of the Reapers, "You are right, the Reapers are parasitic."

Lieutenant TJ Murphy was sitting in the other room at the bar with Steve Cortez as he asked,

"What's your history in this universe, Steve?"

Cortez replied, "Well, I started service with the Alliance about ten years ago. I was stationed on the Carrier SSV Hawking, flying F-61 Tridents. After the Hawking, I was stationed on the colony, Ferris Fields. I had a husband when I was stationed there."

Murphy stated after Cortez mentioned his husband, "Same-sex marriages, you can't deny any kind of discrimination. What happened to your husband?"

Cortez replied, "Died in a Collector attack a year ago. Robert contacted me when I was working at a small complex outside of the main colony. He got out of the field the Collectors put up and told me to move on. Then the Reaper attack hits and I start thinking about him again. But Shepard, being my friend, he helped me move on at last."

Murphy realized, "Your loss is similar to mine, Steve."

Cortez asked, "How so?"

Murphy replied, "Equally similar." He began, "When I was a marine going into pilot training at a UNSC Military Academy, I was married; my wife was one of the Flight Instructors. She taught me the simulations of the Covenant craft, like the Banshee fighters and the Phantom dropships. I was taught the simulations of the every UNSC aircraft and Space craft that the UNSC has. These were the happiest days of my life from training to all the times I spent with her." His face turned to a frown, "Then one day, Melissa was going through my final evaluation when a Covenant carrier emerged from the clouds. It launched its fighters and dropships as I ran to a nearby Longsword Fighter. I took off to intercept the Covenant dropships before they could unload their troops. Melissa was in another Longsword when I took off, when she took off, I noticed a Covenant Seraph Fighter moving to intercept. I shot down the Seraph before it took her down, but further on during the mission, a Seraph fighter caught us by surprise as we banked away from it. The Seraph fired its Fuel Rod Cannons at Melissa and shot her down. I saw her trying to level her bird to do a belly landing, but sheâ€¦.said that she lost control. Before she crashed, she said, 'TJ, I'm not going to make it. I love you, TJ; I don't want you to mourn me for the rest of your life.' She crashed with the nose almost straight; I shouted her name out as loud as I could. After Orbital Defense managed to take out the Carrier, I went to my wife's crash site and sifted through the wreckage, hoping to see if she would be alive. When I found her body, I clutched it in my arms as I burst into tears and now wanted to kill those Covenant bastards. I brought Melissa's body back to Earth for a proper funeral after finding out that she approved my final evaluation before that Supercarrier showed up."

Cortez said, "That's hard for you to go through something like that. The Covenant killing your wife, it's something that scars you. Just like when the Collectors took Robert."

Murphy looked at the Alliance Pilot, "We were in a three-decade war and I thought I could've had a normal life during the war. But there was no way that could happen when the Covenant were at our throats."

Cortez replied, "Sometimes the only family we have is what command we are assigned to. I fly shuttles under Shepard's command and you've got your Pelican and the Spartans with you."

Murphy realized, "For us pilots, Shepard and his crew are your family, while the Spartans are my family."

Cortez replied, "Joker is basically the best helmsman flying the Normandy."

Murphy chuckled, "He's a helmsman, that's for sure. But I could strap him into the Pelican to see how he flies it."

Cortez asked, "What does the Pelican look like?" Murphy pulled up a recording from his helmet cam and showed the Pelican parked in a skycar parking lot, "This is the Pelican, fitted for full-combat pursuit. It has a chain gun as its primary, a mounted Spartan Laser as it's secondary, both are mounted in the front for me to use. The turret is used to repel enemy fighters from reaching us as well as two side turrets that disband enemy infantry. It's also able to carry troops and vehicles into combat zones."

Cortez looked at the picture and said, "And its size is how it's named, right?"

Murphy shrugged, "Something like that."

Cortez laughed, "Coming from a brother in arms." The Pilot and the Marine/Pilot fist bumped.

Finally the results of EDI's scans are in; Shepard called everyone including the Spartans and their Marine/Pilot to the meeting room. After everyone gathered, EDI said,

"Thought the data's route structure was erased, the logic integrity remains viable because of the Promethean Watcher."

Brooks spoke, "EDI has an incredible talent for this stuff and that Watcher we encountered as well, I know they are both AIs, still. We found an encrypted communication from a few days ago. We need another minute to crack it"

Joker asked, "A whole minute? EDI can shave that down to five seconds."

Spartan Grayson replied, "A Watcher can do that in the same time."

Joker turned to the Spartan; well he had to look up, "The Watcher was an unexpected encounter."

EDI turned to the two, "I thought it best to allow Staff Analyst Brooks the chance to improve her decryption skills."

Joker said, "And now you've lost your chance to show off." Brooks said that Shepard's crew are legends to the rest of the Alliance. Spartan Walker stepped in,

"The Master Chief's squad, Spartan Blue Team are Legends to the UNSC."

Brooks turned to Walker, "They are the kind that people look up to. The kind they owe their lives to."

Walker replied, "Still sounds a lot like Blue Team." Wrex complained about why everyone's shooting at them while Tali joked that they were mostly shooting at Wrex. The Krogan thought that he gained weight, Liara stepped in,

"That just means there is more of the legend to love." Wrex sneered

as Brooks finished why the crew of the Normandy were legends, Walker finished,

"Definitely like Blue Team."

Shepard spoke, "It's just part of the job."

Garrus asked, "Job? You mean the rest of you are getting paid for this?"

Spartan Davenport patted Garrus' shoulder, "We all get paid for this. That's what Soldiers always do if they survive."

Brooks decrypted the data, "Here we go." She sifted through the data and said in shock, "Wow, those mercs who were after you, they bought a lot of weaponsâ€¦like big ones."

Spartan Tanner spoke in amazement, "Big weaponsâ€¦like a Mantis mech something that qualifies as a drivable mech?" A holographic Atlas mech appears on the console as Tanner realized, "It might not look like a Mantis, but it looks deadly like a Mantis."

Major Kaidan Alenko looked at the Spartan and back at the hologram and asked, "But what do they need with that kind of firepower?"

Glyph started to go over to them while its center beeped red as Javik said, "It appears this drone is about to rebel." Spartan Grayson face-palmed, "Glyph's a Dumb AI; he's only suitable for one function and one function only."

Glyph spoke, "Spartan Grayson's insight on AI creation from UNSC standards is correct." Spartan Walker asked, "Is there something we should know?"

Glyph replied, "I have just monitored the Commander's Spectre Access Code in use at the Citadel Archives."

Shepard spoke, "Punch it up." Glyph pulled up a map of the archives as one of the areas went red as Brooks said, "The Archives are going into emergency lockdown. Whoever's hacking your records is there right now!"

Shepard asked, "What do we know about the place?"

Garrus using his history on the Citadel spoke, "Council keeps sensitive historical information there, real hush-hush. Even my old C-sec clearance never got me in."

Spartan Davenport said while putting on her Mark V helmet and pulling out her Binary Rifle, "Then we'll let ourselves in."

Shepard acknowledged Spartan Davenport's enthusiasm as all Spartans motioned after her; he turned around, "Gear up and letsâ€¦" He stopped at the sight of a Volus holding something, Shepard asked,

"What's with the Volus?" James shrugged, "Pizza delivery guy, I got the munchies." Spartan Walker saw a few of those aliens when observing the Citadel and the Casino, the Volus said,

"*hsss* Double Pepperoni." Brooks looked at the map of the Archives and said, "These archives are huge, you'll have a lot of ground to cover. Shame you can't bring everyone."

Shepard turned towards the squad, "Who says we can't? All hands on deck for this one, and that means you too, Crimson."

Spartan Walker pulled out his MA5D Assault Rifle, "We won't let you down in the Archives." James asked, "But who's taking point with you?"

The Spartans heard the squad going 'ahem' it was basically a choice that Shepard chooses his squadmates. But the Volus went 'ahem' and asked, "*hss* Who's going to pay the bill?"

* * *

><p>In the Archives, the Promethean Knight and its Watcher companion were spying on an enemy formation, the formation looked like they were waiting for something or someone. The Knight had a feeling now that he and his Watcher would get busy soon enough. The Watcher spoke with the Knight saying something about a transmission between the squads and the leader of these mercs, the Watcher played it,<p>

"_Commander Shepard has found out where we are. Shepard also has those Spartans with him, eliminate Shepard, his squad and kill those Spartans in the process. Our spy told us about a Promethean Watcher and Knight that was present when Khan was terminated. Keep your eyes out for that thing."_

The other end of was one of the squad leaders, _"We'll keep an eye out for that Knight, we already got a definite ID on the Knight, thanks to our spy."_

The Watcher cut off communications between the two as they heard an explosion from above. The Knight looked at a catwalk and saw a Krogan flanked by a Turian, it was two squads, but he only saw one Reclaimer. The Knight saw the squads get fired upon by the enemy formation the Knight soon activated his Promethean vision and spotted four Reclaimer signatures sneaking behind the enemy soldiers as one of the Reclaimers snapped a soldier's neck, a second one forcefully turned the soldier around and stabbed him with a combat knife, a third Reclaimer tackled a sniper as she brought her knife down on the sniper, and the fourth Reclaimer pulled out an Energy Sword and impaled the fourth enemy soldier.

Spartan Walker and Fireteam Crimson were having a hell of a good time with fighting off the CAT6 soldiers. Those CAT6 bozos are nothing compared to a squad of Spartans and despite that they are working with a squad of non-Spartans, they knew not to get on Shepard's bad side. Spartan Walker de-cloaked as a CAT6 Specialist attempted to whack him with a shock baton, he ducked at the last minute and pulled out his Energy Sword and stabbed the soldier through the abdomen, instant fatality. Walker ordered,

"Spartans, de-cloak! They know we're here now!" Walker fired his MA5D Assault Rifle as Spartan Grayson was dual-wielding two Covenant Plasma Rifles; Walker had a combination plan,

"Alex, use your Plasma Rifles on their shields and I'll finish them off with the MA5D." A green light winked and Grayson peppered the CAT6 soldiers with Plasma fire while Walker fired his MA5D at the same group of mercs. Once all the mercs in their vicinity were down, The Mysterious Figure, who was holding Brooks hostage, yelled,

"Enough! Drop your weapons or this won't end well for her!" Brooks said to her captor, "You bastard!"

The Spartans looked around and saw that they were surrounded as well as the squad; Shepard placed his weapon down, "Alright." Walker said to his team,

"Stand down, at least for now."

Grayson asked, "John, what are you doing?" Walker motioned towards a nearby catwalk where they saw a familiar figure and a Watcher. Walker turned off his external speakers and said over the helmet com, "Spartans, lock on to him. He could be an ally to us." All green lights winked as they locked on to their 'friend.' Fireteam Crimson also dropped their weapons with a dull clang and the Mysterious Figure released Brooks. Shepard looked at this shadowy figure,

"Whatever you're getting away with, there's nowhere you can run, nowhere you can hide where we can't find you."

The Mysterious Figure shrugged, "Hide, why?" He stepped into the light, "I'm Commander Shepard, I never hide!"

Lieutenant Murphy asked, "Is it just me or am I seeing double?"

Tali replied, "It's not just you." The 'other' Shepard leapt from the catwalk down to their level as Shepard asked,

"Who are you?" The duplicate replied, "You're not the only Shepard that Cerberus brought back to life. But at least one of us will finally do something with it."

Shepard asked, "Where did you come from?" The duplicate replied as he pointed, "The same DNA as you."

Spartan Walker said in shock, "A Flash Clone. Dr. Halsey told me about those types. I'm surprised that this one didn't die."

The clone turned toward the Spartan, "Cerberus spent no expense resurrecting him. With me, I was created for spare parts in case he needed another arm or a heart or a lung."

Shepard asked, "Where have been this whole time?" The clone turned back to the Commander, "In a coma, until I woke up six months ago. While you were in a jail cell on Earth, I was learning to be human. Amazing what a person could do with enough neural implants."

Lieutenant Murphy called out, "You might look and act like Shepard, but let's face it, that role was filled."

The clone looked at the Lieutenant, "By the wrong man, its time the understudy had his day."

Shepard asked, "Did the Illusive Man send you?" The Clone replied, "No, he abandoned me when he had what he wantedâ€¦you."

Spartan Davenport asked, "Then what is your problem with us?"

The Clone replied to the female Spartan, "Because I don't have his memories. I never fool my supposed friends, the ones who abandoned their duty to join the Cult of Shepard."

Spartan Tanner started laughing at the Clone calling Shepard's squad a Cult, "You should go into comedic business instead of trying to kill us." The Clone clenched his fist, "Like you four Spartans and your pilot, you've ruined that hit that I've set when you first made your appearance!"

Spartan Walker replied at his accusation, "You are a Sad Strange Little Man or Clone."

The Clone turned to Tali, "And you, Tali'Zorah vas Normandy, I don't know if I should kill you with a bullet or take off your helmet and cough."

Tali retaliated, "You're just a cheap imitation of the real thing!" The Clone spoke to Shepard, "I'm the real thing perfected, I'm you without the wear and tear, Shepard, the doubts, the failures, I'm the Lone Wolf you were always meant to beâ€¦without the emotional baggage holding me back."

Liara spoke, "No one will ever believe you're Shepard!"

Spartan Walker stepped in, "Everyone knows that Shepard is not a Lone Wolf. We are a team that Lone Wolf stuff stays behind." The Clone looked at the Spartan and the Asari, "They will when I'm flying the ship."

Shepard tried to issue emergency lockdown on the Normandy and transmitted command codes, but the Clone got a hold of the codes, blocked the signal and ordered an emergency departure. Liara noticed Walker looking up at the Catwalk, she was going to ask until he silently pointed to where he was looking and saw their 'friend' prepping for attack. The Spartan returned a smile, but because of the helmet, he spread two fingers across the faceplate while Liara slightly smiled. They heard Shepard intimidate the Clone saying that he'll be glad to kill himself. The Clone turned away and ordered,

"Execute them, the Spartans and their pilot too; The Cult of Shepard ends today."

Until something landed on the Clone's chest, knocking him down until he was flat on his back being pinned down by something. The Clone looked up and saw a menacing face with glowing blue eyes and two inner arms while the outer arms were floating, the creature's faceplate opened up revealing a blue human mimetic skull intimidating the Clone. He ordered,

"SHOOT THIS THING!" The CAT6 Soldiers turned their weapons towards

the Knight until Spartan Walker's Overshield activated as a green shield enveloped him as he snapped a CAT6 Specialist's neck while Shepard picked up Walker's MA5D to kill a CAT6 Heavy when its Omni-Shield was down. Shepard tossed Walker the MA5D while Shepard picked up his N7 Valkyrie. The Spartan handed Liara her Geth Plasma SMG as he used the Prefect's Hardlight Dagger system to kill the CAT6 soldier that had a pistol to her head. Shepard grabbed Tali's Geth Plasma Shotgun and used it against a CAT6 soldier that had his weapon trained on her. After killing the CAT6 captor, Shepard gave Tali her shotgun back. The others took the Knight's appearance as a signal to break free. The Clone forced the Knight off of him and ran into another corridor.

At that exact moment, all CAT6 soldiers had their weapons trained on the Promethean Knight as it began swaying its outer arms slightly. All soldiers opened fire on the Knight hoping to kill it, but it was more than they bargained for when the Knight's shields went active and their shots barely made a dent. Spartan Walker put his arm across Shepard saying,

"We might want to wait this one out." Shepard acknowledged this as a CAT6 Sniper tried to break through the Knight's shield until the Knight pulled out a Binary Rifle and aimed at the sniper. The Promethean fired the Forerunner Sniper Rifle, scoring a direct hit causing the merc to disintegrate. The Knight noticed two CAT6 Heavies with their Omni-Shields up as they attempted to charge the Promethean until the Knight swung its Blade Arm, cutting through the Omni-Shields as well as the flesh of the Heavies.

A group of CAT6 Specialists fired on the Knight as they tried to kill it until the Promethean pulled out the Incineration Cannon and fired in the center of the CAT6 group, when the orbs impacted the area they spread in four directions, those who got caught in it disintegrated instantly. The Knight pulled out a Lightrifle and picked off the survivors of the group and aimed for any CAT6 Snipers on the high ground. It spotted a CAT6 Heavy behind cover and raised its Blade Arm forward. The Spartans knew exactly what this action meant as a yellow orb fired behind the Heavy's cover. At the point of impact, an orange orb enveloped the CAT6 Heavy for a few seconds until it exploded outward causing the CAT6 Heavy to disintegrate.

A few CAT6 Heavies manage to reach the Knight so that they could attack it in CQC but they never saw the Knight's Blade Arm coming as it slashed through them. The Knight looked up and saw the glass model of the Citadel and signaled its Watcher to shoot the Boltshot at one of the arms, because another duo of CAT6 Heavies reached him and attempted to issue the same thing. The Watcher appeared and shot one of the model's arms as it dropped on top of the CAT6 Heavies as the Knight Teleported to the squad's side. The Knight looked at them and said,

"_Go Reclaimers, we will handle these Meddlers! We will catch up with you once we are done."_

They had no question to the Knight but to just move on into the archives and stop the Clone Shepard.

Spartan Walker and Fireteam Crimson took the high ground as Fireteams Hammerhead and Mako took alternate routes.

Walker contacted Shepard, "That Knight is officially an ally. If we encounter him again, don't fire on him."

Shepard replied, "Copy that, Crimson. We'll pin an IFF tag on that Knight if he shows up deeper in the archives. Fireteam Mako, take point while Fireteam Hammerhead takes flank."

Brooks said on another end, "Good, what's a Mako?"

Liara replied on Shepard's end, "Something we could use right about now."

Lieutenant Murphy responded, "Fireteam Hammerhead confirmed." Cortez interrupted, "And the Mako's got nothing on the Hammerhead."

The Spartans heard various CAT6 soldiers dying because of the Knight's relentless force of attacks until the communications from a CAT6 squad called Rapier Squad,

"_The Watcherâ€¦just spawned these things! They're fast, and annoying, we've taken heavy losses from those Crawlers. JUST SHOOT THAT DAMN WATCHER!_"_

* * *

><p> As the Spartans moved deep into the Archives, Spartan Grayson initiated a conversation with Walker while checking their corners,<p>

"While we were held against our will, I noticed that you made the Spartan Smile at Liara."

Walker shrugged, "Maybe it's because I warned her that the Knight is here and when she saw it I gave her the Spartan Smile to make sure that it's okay." Then he had another option, "Or maybe it's because I'm growing to like her. I don't know which."

Davenport replied, "I overheard you talking to her about the Forerunners and your armor."

Tanner finished, "And don't get us wrong, John. We know you were always into alien scientists."

Walker realized what his fellow Spartans were reminding him of what he prefers, "You're right, and Liara is an archeologist that falls in the confines of scientist. She's smart, resourceful and she knows how to hold out against impossible odds. She's been a friend of Shepard for the past three years in this universe." He smiled, "She knows about these Protheans and the last of his kind is not the friendliest type, but he'll open up. When I told her about the Forerunners, she saw similarities between the Protheans and the Forerunners. She learned a lot of knowledge from me about a species that the four of us plus Murphy know about."

They heard Shepard on the comm, "_Shepard to Fireteam Crimson, Status report!_"_

Walker looked at where they are, "Walker here, we've made it deep within the archives. But we see a CAT6 Atlas that could cause serious damage to Fireteams Mako and Hammerhead."

Shepard replied, _"Nice catch, Spartans. I'll order the Fireteams to hold position until you take it out."_

Walker looked at the Atlas, the archive vaults and the walkways leading to the Atlas; he pulled out a Plasma Pistol and said,

"Actually, Commander, We're going to take it. Crimson, out." Spartan Grayson looked at what Walker meant,

"So you are going to jump across the walkway, vault over the railing and run alongside the vaults to reach the Atlas. Then you can disable it using an overcharged Plasma Pistol shot, so you can pry the cockpit open and kill the pilot, allowing you to take control."

Spartan Walker nodded, "Exactly as planned." Spartan Tanner asked, "Since when did this turn into Titanfall?"

Walker didn't answer as he leaped over to the other walkway, vaulted over the railings and ran alongside the vaults until the Atlas spotted him. He heard the CAT6 comms saying,

"_It's one of those Spartans! He's heading straight for the Atlas, shoot him!" _

Walker jumped from the vaults, fired an Overcharged Plasma Pistol shot to disable it long enough for him to land on the Atlas. He ignored the CAT6 Soldier pounding his Overshield as the other Spartans picked them off, following his example. He pried open the cockpit and slammed his Hard-Light Dagger into the Pilot. After disposing the corpse, he sat in the cockpit as the Atlas came back online. He opened a comm line to Shepard,

"Walker to Shepard, Atlas is under control, I repeat, Atlas is under control!"

Shepard said in amusement, _"Spartans, you never cease to amaze us. Hammerhead and Mako are coming in on your position now!"_

The Spartans soon reformed as they moved up with the Normandy Fireteams as they covered Shepard and his team from above. Walker realized that he depleted the mech's shields when he fired that Plasma Pistol shot to disable it. He pressed a few buttons on the Prefect's TACPAD, and the Atlas' Shields came back online plus the Prefect's Overshield system added to the Atlas. He noticed that it caused some attention when Kaiden tapped the hull,

"What did you do?"

Walker replied, "I somehow manage to expand my armor's Overshield to the Atlas' main shield doubling its strength."

Kaiden replied, "Okay, It will prove useful in aiding Shepard."

Walker nodded and said, "Crimson 1 to all Crimson units, we will be joining Fireteam Hammerhead."

Garrus replied over the comm, _"Aww come on."_

Lieutenant Murphy saluted, "Nice of you to join us, Spartans."

Walker replied, "Likewise, Lieutenant. Now let's take out Razor Squad."

Spartan Grayson noticed something, "Razor Squad is already fighting something and its not any of the Fireteams." The Spartans and the Normandy crew looked at what Razor Squad was fighting and they saw something swipe its Blade Arm and teleport charge in a Zigzag formation and instantly killed three CAT6 Heavies while a squad of Crawlers overwhelmed the other CAT6 soldiers while losing a few Crawlers along the way. It turns out the Promethean Knight has dealt with Razor Squad before they came to that point. Before they moved on, Shepard gave the Knight thumbs up saying,

"Thanks" The Knight nodded as it stayed behind while the others went deeper into the Archives. As they made their way to try and surround the target, they heard one of the CAT6 soldiers say,

"_That Damn Knight tore through Razor Squad. The Spartans have hijacked our Atlas and Shepard's still alive."_ The Clone soon replied, _"The next person who says that is fired!"_

Walker decided to use the Atlas' comm system and send an intimidating message to the Clone, "Attention Flash Clone Shepard, This is Spartan Commander John Walker, Leader of Fireteam Crimson, you might be trying to steal Shepard's Identity, but even if you do. You won't be able to get away with this. Have you ever faced a SPARTAN-IV before? Few Terrorists have and you and your low-life minions are considered Terrorists. When we find you, you are going to regret trying to kill us, especially if it involves our newfound squadmates that Shepard has had with him throughout his career. But you better make sure you don't wet yourself before we arrive. Crimson 1, out."

The Spartan had a slight grin under the helmet until he got an angry message from the Clone, _"Look here, Spartan. I don't know who you are but you are messing with the wrong guy. You might've hijacked my only Atlas, killed most of my men, but Shepard has had the spotlight for too long. I'm not a Terrorist; I just want to surpass the original. I have a team of my own and you keep killing them all. Laugh while you can, because it will be the last thing that you will ever do."_

Walker contacted the real Shepard and said, "Shepard, this is Spartan Walker, come in." There was static and he suspected something was wrong. Then he managed to think back on the mission prior to their arrival. How they found Khan dead on the scene even though there was heavy security. So he decided to do one thing,

"Run a scan on Staff Analyst Maya Brooks." After the Atlas' computer and Alliance databases had no sign of a Maya Brooks, he soon realized that she was playing Shepard's team like a fiddle. His eyes widened behind the visor as he exited the Atlas and said, "I better remember where I parked."

Spartan Grayson spoke, "Already have that covered, you go on ahead." The Spartan leapt from the walkway and ran into the door that

Shepard's team ran through. He ran with his MA5D by his side until he spotted Shepard, Tali and Liara about to step into the vault, He yelled,

"Commander, it's a Trap!" The squad looked at the Spartan in shock as the vault shields activated. Liara looked at the shields and said,

"That can't be good." Spartan Walker activated his comm to try and contact the rest of the Spartans, but there was no response. He tried again to see if anyone was on this frequency. Until the clone stepped forward and said as he crossed his arms,

"The short answer is no, they're not." The Commander fired at the shield until the Clone shook his head, "The longer answer involves you and your friends trapped in iridium vaults where you will be forgotten for well, forever." Shepard replied, "Others know about this, about you. The Alliance will stop you." The Spartan spoke,

"This whole thing was a trap and Brooks is the center of it all."

Brooks appeared from behind the clone, "Well, I guess the Spartan catches up pretty well on secrets."

Walker pointed, "You've been a spy for the Flash Clone this whole time and it only took me until when I ran a scan on you to figure it out."

Shepard asked, "Who the hell are you and do you really think I won't track you down?" Brooks replied, "My name doesn't matter, I never keep the same one more than a few days. And if the Illusive Man hasn't found me yet, you never will."

Shepard realized, "You're Cerberus?" Brooks replied, "Was. Mr. Illusive and I didn't see eye to eye. He's indoctrinated, whereas I prefer the whispers in my head to be my own."

Shepard asked, "Why not come to me? We could've worked together." Brooks replied, "In a way, we did, I'm the one who put together all those dossiers on your Suicide Mission."

The Spartan realized from what Shepard told him, "The Collector Base?" Brooks turned to the Spartan, "There was the Salarian doctor, the Asari Justicar, the Quarian." She looked at Tali, "Nice to have finally met you, Tali."

Tali replied in anger, "Charmed." Brooks continued to the group, "They were all mistakes. We were a Pro-Human Group who started looking to aliens for help. So I bided my time and when I found another you, who agreed, I woke him up."

Walker asked, "What was the point of this trap?" Brooks replied in sly sort of way, "You might not have arrived when this started, but all we really wanted was Shepard's Spectre code. But then he survived the hit, no thanks to you, your merry band of Super-Soldiers, your pilot and your armed dropship, and insisted on bringing his damned Asari into it, so I had to tie up loose ends."

Walker became angry, "The Arms dealer."

Shepard realized this as he saw a Hard-Light dagger spring from the Spartan's left gauntlet as Brooks turned to Shepard, "But then that Knight, the Watcher and your Sexbot just had to go and recover the data. So here we are, forced here to contain the situation."

They noticed another Hard-Light dagger spring from the Spartan's right gauntlet as the Spartan went into a fury,

"Once I get out of here, you will regret angering a Spartan. Because I would use these Hard-Light Daggers and stab you two repeatedly until you draw your last breaths! Then I would decapitate you two with my Energy Sword and mount them on the Pelican's hood! Then I would have Murphy accelerate until BOTH OF YOUR HEADS FALL OFF THE PELICAN!"

Shepard said to Brooks, "Now he's angry." Brooks said unaffected by the Spartan's insult, "That sounds very dramatic and if someone like Commander Shepard made the threat, I'd be worried." She turned to Shepard, "But you're not Shepard, not anymore." The Clone spoke, "You had Miranda, I had her, mine has more bite." Brooks said, "It was fun while it lasted." As the Clone moved to set things right for his own gain, he questioned Shepard saving more non-humans than humans. Shepard proclaimed that human or non-human, they all matter. After the Clone updated the handprint scanner for his own, he was going to return to the Normandy. But something happened,

The Spartan IV lost it as he said, "FUCK YOU, TWO!" and jabbed both Hard-Light Daggers into the barrier as the barrier began to ripple with the effect of the daggers as the Spartan began to drag his arms farther in order to make a hole in the barrier. Brooks and the Clone were shocked by this soldier's anger in what the Clone did. They heard him strain under the strength of the shields as he began to move through the barrier. After pushing through the barrier, he used his excessive rage, pushed Brooks aside and made a mad dash for the clone as he pulled out his Energy Sword; the clone activated his Omni-Blade.

The duel between the Spartan and the Clone commenced when Walker used his fast movements to counter the Clone's Omni-Blade. The Clone managed to counter the Energy Sword as they moved throughout the area where they're fighting. As they locked blades and they were facing each other, the Spartan yelled,

"I'LL KILL YOU!"

The Clone replied, "So I've underestimated you." The Spartan pushed toward the Clone as he slammed his left arm against the Clone's armor causing a grunt from his adversary, they locked blades again as the Clone spoke, "What are you really fighting for? Are you fighting for Shepard, your Spartans or is it Liara?"

The Spartan yelled, "I WILL KILL YOU!"

The Clone stated, "If you wish to join Shepard and his crew, so be it!" The Clone tried to make a slash at the Spartan, but the Spartan's techniques with the Energy Sword proved too much for the Clone as the Spartan used a sweep kick to knock the clone to the ground. The Spartan deactivated his Energy Sword and created a

Hard-Light Barrier around the Clone as he lifted him up telepathically and slammed him to the ground, Walker spoke in an angry tone as he re-ignited and pointed the energy sword to his downed adversary,

"YOU WILL DIE WHERE YOU LIE!"

Shepard called out from the Vault, "Don't kill him yet."

Walker stated, "You want him dead as much as I do."

Shepard replied, "But not yet."

Walker asked, "You want to take him prisoner?"

Shepard replied, "Yes, we can present him to the Council, put him on trial for crimes against my life and my crew. And then we'll execute him."

Walker began thinking that if he lets him live, the Council will think that he's the real Shepard, but he doesn't know exactly. But if he kills him, he doesn't know what would happen. He decided to de-activate his Energy Sword, but because of breaking through the barrier and the duel, it caused him to pass out as he fell face first onto the floor. Shepard and his squad actually saw a Spartan go down due to exhaustion.

Liara was actually worried about the Spartan after seeing him lose himself to rage and dueling the Clone as he constantly yelled out that he would kill him, but after Shepard convincing him to let him live. The Spartan's rage died down and he dropped like a rock into unconsciousness. She had a feeling that this Spartan, despite his knowledge of the Forerunners, has a prone sense to violence when it comes to intimidating enemies like the Clone. She has to help the Spartan to calm him down.

The Clone got up as well as Brooks and he said to Shepard, "Now if you excuse me, the Normandy needs its captain. Even after facing a monster like your Spartan, it needs its captain now more than ever. Soâ€¦" He turned around, "I should go."

Brooks spoke, "Farewell, Commander, I guess this is where legendsâ€¦" She looked at the unconscious Spartan, "And monsters go to die." They left as the vault sealed itself and Shepard's squad in it as well. As the vault closed, a lone Promethean Crawler came to the unconscious Spartan and looked at the moving vault. It sent out a signal so that the Knight will know where to go.

Inside the vault, Liara said, "That went well, though after seeing the Spartan get angry like that. He needs help after this is all over."

Shepard kept pondering on when the Clone said, 'I should go' and wondered if he sounded like that. Liara remembered that it was one of the first things that Shepard said to her. Tali was reminding everyone if they should worry about their death from lack of oxygen. Until they saw a familiar image of the Promethean Knight Teleport into the vault, wrap its outer arms across the three of them and teleport out of the vault.

****So, this took longer than I expected this chapter to be. But it turns out that Walker has bestial side of his personality. Liara seems concerned about the Spartan-IV if he has that monstrous side of his soldier side. So the Promethean Knight makes a full combat appearance as an ally to the team. Now comes the part where the Spartans and the Knight retake the Normandy from the Flash Clone Shepard. Round two will come.****

5. The Real, the Clone and the Spartan

****Hey, guys, John here with a brand new chapter and some news involving the previous chapter. That conversation that Cortez had with Murphy, No, I'm not going to pair them. It's going to be a brotherly bond between Cortez and Murphy, like a wingman. ****

****About Spartan Walker's Bestial Rage that made him tear apart the Vault Barrier, it would be revealed somewhere further in the story.****

Chapter 5 The Real, the Clone, and the Spartan

Spartan John Walker regained consciousness, he remembered being given a choice to either kill or capture the Clone Shepard. He chose to capture the Clone, but he passed out due to exhaustion from his rage. He felt some thumps and realized that he was moving; he opened his eyes and realized that he was inside the captured CAT6 Atlas while it was blowing a hole into the ceiling and using its thrusters to exit the archives. As the Atlas touched down, the Atlas' comm spoke with Spartan Grayson's voice,

"_John, you alive in there?"_ Walker replied, "Alex, I'm fine, but why am I back inside the captured Atlas?"

Commander Shepard's voice came on the line, "When the Knight teleported us out of the Vault, Liara immediately went to where you passed out. We contacted Kaidan and Wrex to help Liara and I carry you with our biotics. Kaidan argued about how heavy the armor was. Wrex couldn't comprehend how you guys wear it. But because of our biotics straining to the weight of your armor, we had to put you back in the Atlas while Grayson pilots it via remote control."

Walker removed his helmet to feel his head as he said, "Well, thanks guys. By the way, what happened to the Knight?" The Knight came into view as it spoke,

"_We have requested to join Shepard's crew. But we have very grave news; The Clone Shepard is stealing the ship designated as 'Normandy' and we have to stop him."_

Walker hit the open canopy button on the Atlas and stepped onto the ground, although feeling a little shaky on landing. He asked Shepard,

"Am I fit for duty?"

Shepard nodded, "As long as you don't go through that rage in the archives."

Walker placed his helmet back on, "I won't be doing that again, but

it comes almost instantaneously." He looked at Shepard, "I'm not promising that I won't kill the Clone."

Shepard smiled, "This is a Capture or Kill order on him right now."

Walker took out his MA5D as the rest of his team gathered, but he turned his attention to the Knight, "But if you're joining us, what should we call you?"

The Promethean replied, _"Watcher has suggested that I would be called, 'Wenrum' after a Salarian romance tale. Wenrum is designated as 'White Knight' in Salarian terms."_

Liara realized, "There is a planet in the system where my base is. It has the same name and it's named after its white surface."

Wenrum's back shook as it replied, _"Confirmed by Star Charts from SSV Normandy, Wenrum is among these worlds. As it will be an appropriate metaphor for a name. My name is Wenrum, Promethean Knight and I now serve the Reclaimers."_ He knelt down in front of the Spartans.

Tali spoke, "I guess this Knight worships you four."

Spartan Walker replied, "Forerunner Combat AIs like the Prometheans usually serve the Didact, but Wenrum does not."

Wenrum got up as he replied, _"Discussion over why I don't feel the Didact is something that we should discuss later. We must stop the Clone."_

Joker appeared in a Skycar, "I got room for Shepard, plus twoâ€¦." The Pelican touched down as Murphy said over the comm, "Spartans and Knight pile in!" Joker finished, "And do it fast because the other Shepard is stealing my ship!" Shepard motioned Tali and Liara to get aboard the Skycar until he noticed disgruntled looks among his crew,

"What?"

Wrex grumbled, "I wanted to go." Javik spoke, "So did I. Fifty Thousand years later and I rarely get picked." Wenrum teleported in front of the Prothean, _"One hundred thousand years later and I serve the Reclaimers on their team."_ The Promethean teleported back to the Pelican.

Shepard said to his crew, "Joker will come back for you. I promise." The Skycar sealed up and the Pelican's loaded ramp closed as the two transports lifted off to the Docks.

* * *

><p>Inside the Skycar, Joker began to pout,<p>

"This is why I hate Shore Leave. I swear, you park the ship for five minutes."

Shepard asked, "Can you contact Citadel Flight Control and get them to deny the departure request?"

Joker shook his head, "Tried, all the comm lines in the area are jammed, probably to make it easier for them to steal my ship!"

Shepard replied, "We'll stop them." Until the comm line in Shepard's Blood Dragon Helmet sprang to life,

"_Crimson to Shepard, Wenrum is beginning to start the diversion. He will draw of the CAT6 thugs in the area so we can get to the ship."_

Shepard replied, "With all of your combat methods, the Council will want to know what's going on."

Walker paused and replied, "_I understand, Commander. After this, My Spartans can't remain a secret for long."_

Shepard decided, "Tell Wenrum that he's good to go." The Spartan-IV replied, "_Its time that the Flash Clone actually sees who he's dealing withâ€¦for real this time. He might've altered your biometric logs. But the Council's not stupid enough to see him as the Real thing. I know they were stupid to deny your warnings, but this is different."_ Hecut the comm line as they saw the docks erupting in a firefight between the CAT6 thugs and the Promethean Knight, Watcher and anything the Watcher can spawn.

Joker approached the docks where the Normandy is, "Okay, Citadel Systems are targeting the car, but I don't think they spotted the Pelican." Spartan Walker came on the line,

"_Commander, this is Walker, we've dropped out near the docking tunnel of the Normandy. We've got hostile forces near our position, we'll hold out until you get here or if Wenrum kills them all."_

Shepard replied, "Wait for us to arrive at the docking tunnel. Joker is going back to pick up the rest of the crew."

Murphy came on to the comm, "_Murphy here, I'm remaining on station in case of assist."_

Shepard asked, "Lieutenant, how did you evade Citadel Systems from locking on to you?"

Murphy smirked, "_Courtesy of our Friendly Neighborhood Wenrum. He masked our radar blip and made us invisible to Citadel defense."_

Shepard and his team advanced towards the Normandy while encountering just a pocket resistance of CAT6 Soldiers. They saw a platoon of CAT6 Heavies in their path until they were swarmed by a bunch of Promethean Crawlers, one even sniped a Heavy causing him to disintegrate.

Liara saw a Crawler get killed near her as she ran out of ammo from her Predator Pistol. She looked at the Crawler's remains and pulled out a Forerunner Boltshot. She was curious on how it works until she was jumped by a CAT6 Specialist as she held the trigger on the gun. The sides opened up for a short time until it let out a close-range

shot that killed the CAT6 soldier. She looked at the damage it did and she was impressed. When the squad moved up to meet with the Spartans, Liara spotted the remains of another Crawler as she picked up a Forerunner Suppressor. She didn't have time to compare it with her Hornet SMG because a CAT6 Heavy ambushed her. She just squeezed the Suppressor's trigger and it fired multiple hard-light projectiles. The projectiles pierced the Heavy's shield and tore through its armor like it was nothing.

As they approached the Normandy, they found Wenrum impaling a CAT6 Sniper as he said,

"_Never show aggression towards the Reclaimers and their friends."_ The Promethean removed its Blade Arm from the Sniper as he turned toward Shepard,

"_The Reclaimers have confirmed that the Normandy is going to take off."_

Walker came up to Wenrum, "They are not even going through any pre-flight checks." Shepard said,

"Let's get aboard before it takes off." They entered the docking tube as they made their way towards the Normandy entrance. But as they got there, the squad saw Comm Specialist Samantha Traynor, who was pissed off of seeing Shepard,

"Youâ€¦you were just on the Normandy! Youâ€¦you FIRED me, dishonorable discharge for combat unbecoming! You kicked me off the ship with barely enough time to grab my toothbrush!"

Spartan Grayson spoke, "That wasn't the Commander!"

Spartan Walker stepped in, "That was a Flash Clone who 'fired' you. And we're here to either kill or capture him."

Traynor looked at the massive soldiers and the machine, "And who are you?"

Walker spoke, "I'm Spartan John Walker, Commander of Fireteam Crimson. We're here with Shepard to take down the Flash Clone and retake this ship." The machine scanned Traynor's toothbrush as Shepard remembered the name,

"That's a scission pro Mark IV, it uses Mass Effect fields to break up plaque and massage the gums."

Traynor replied, "Yes, I told you that." Wenrum spoke, "_And the Commander remembers the name and description of your tool. The Meddler who fired you isn't the real Shepard."_

Traynor looked at the Promethean, "And this 'meddler' threw me off the ship, if that wasn't him."

Tali replied as she, Liara and the Spartans opened the door, "It was a clone, honestly once you serve on the Normandy long enough, you get used to things like thisâ€¦..including the Spartans and their Forerunner AI."

Traynor was about to ask until Shepard stopped her, "I can explain

more later, for now." Shepard entered the Airlock as the door control turned red,

"It's sealed." Liara spoke, "The Normandy's about to take off."

Wenrum scanned the nearby airlock until he tore open the floor revealing a small hatch, _"Emergency Exit hatch, it is the only way into the ship."_

Traynor looked at the Knight and said, "Thank you." Shepard scanned the hatch, "Manuel lock and it's meant to be opened from the other side any ideas."

Liara spoke, "I could try a biotic field, but I don't have the fine control to trigger it." Wenrum looked at his Blade Arm as Traynor activated her toothbrush.

After both Wenrum's Blade Arm and Traynor's Toothbrush opened the exit hatch, they were in the vents as Shepard said,

"If you told me this morning, that a toothbrush was going to save the Normandy, I would've been quite skeptical."

Spartan Walker replied, "I bet Wenrum knows what he was doing when teleported in here after he and your comm specialist cut through the emergency hatch." The Normandy now took off and was going to get clear of the nebula.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile the Clone was at the CIC and he was finally in Shepard's position that he was denied for so long. Finally the Normandy was his, until a CAT6 soldier spoke,<p>

"Sir, just before take-off, Normandy registered a perimeter access alert. One of the security hatches." The Clone realized, "Him. Where?" The soldier shrugged, "Unknown, when we shut down the AI, we disabled a lot of security systems. Shepard could be anywhere on the ship."

The Clone said, "Shepard is standing right in front of you! Are we clear?"

The Soldier spoke, "Not the least, we also confirmed that the Monster is with Shepard."

The Clone yelled, "Him again!?"

Brooks spoke, "Its better this way, wouldn't you want to take them down yourself?" The Clone realized this and went to the elevator with Brooks,

"Armory, find them, slow them down. Especially, the Monster." The door closed and they were well on their way down to the armory.

Meanwhile underneath the walkway to the cockpit, Shepard and Fireteam Crimson were on their way to the ramp to open the door to the CIC. Shepard stated,

"We're just lucky Traynor still has her toothbrush, thanks to Wenrum's Blade Arm."

Spartan Walker replied, "Wenrum is already in position to ambush the CIC crew. He should strike right aboutâ€¦" They heard a firefight above them, "Now."

Liara spoke, "I'm not quite fond of tight spaces."

Spartan Walker asked, "But you used to work in dig sites?"

Liara replied, "Then I was trapped in a Prothean Stasis Field."

The Spartan spoke, "Point taken." The group heard cries of agony from above as they heard Wenrum doing his job at cleaning house. When they reached the stair access control, Shepard hit the button and entered seeing Wenrum screaming his mimetic skull at a frightened CAT6 Specialist causing him to collapse from fright. Shepard asked,

"Is scaring people your agenda?" Wenrum's faceplate closed and said, _"Anything I do protects the Reclaimers from harm."_ The Promethean turned to the Spartan Commander, _"And this Reclaimer had a combat engagement with the Meddler in the archives. But, now this engagement will be different."_

Walker nodded, "I won't have a rage that I had in the archives." They came to a dumpster that had all of Shepard's things, his ship models, a screaming sound in the bin, including something that made it personalâ€¦his pet hamster. They went into the elevator to head down to the armory, Liara noticed Walker pulling out the hilt of the Energy Sword from his side as she thought about that rage that she witnessed. She noticed that the Spartan's rage suggested a deep personal issue. Liara had to ask,

"Walker, back in the archives, it almost felt like you wanted to kill the clone in cold blood. But what happened to you to enter such a state?"

The Spartan looked at the Asari, "It happened during the Human/Covenant War, I was a marine evacuating the civilians, my parents among them. When I was going to load my parents on the Pelicanâ€¦that's when HE came."

Liara asked, "He?" The Spartan clenched his fist, "Jul'Mdama, he is a Sangheili shipmaster who de-cloaked and jabbed two energy daggers into the abdomens of my parents. After I saw that, I tackled Mdama to ground and repeatedly punched him in the face several times. He sprang his energy dagger, but I used my combat knife to pry his plasma gauntlet off his wrists. I stabbed his legs, then his shoulder. I put my gun to his head as he taunted me to shoot himâ€¦I was urged to, butâ€¦I had to let him go. I told him to leave and warned him that if I ever saw him againâ€¦I would kill him."

Liara was shocked by Walker's story and asked, "After the war ended, what became of Jul'Mdama?"

Walker flashed back, "It was during the Sangheili Civil War, UNSC Infinity was sent to assist our Sangheili Allies, led by Arbiter Thel'Vadam who pursued a permanent peace between the Humans and

Sangheiliâ€¦..some didn't agree and treated the Arbiter like an idiot. Jul was among those who believed that the Arbiter was a traitor and heretic when the Arbiter and his allies are only speaking the truth and what's good for both races."

Liara asked, "What was the truth?"

Walker pointed to Wenrum, "That Forerunner artefacts react to human touch and Forerunner AIs call humans, 'Reclaimers'. My race in my universe are the rightful heirs to the Forerunners. That's what the Arbiter and his followers believed in."

Liara responded, "That's why Wenrum called you, your team and your pilot, Reclaimers." She asked, "But what does Jul'Mdama have to do with your rage besides your story?"

Walker lowered his head, "When I heard that Jul is now the leader of the Covenant Remnant, what remains of the former Covenant, I've been working to find himâ€¦.." He slammed his fist against the elevator door, "And take him down!"

Liara realized, "That's what happened when I was obsessed with hunting the Shadow Broker."

Walker nodded, "That's when I had my first 'Mdama Rage, my eyesight changes and all I can see is Jul'Mdama."

Liara was intrigued on how Walker's 'Mdama Rage worked and it was caused by one. Suddenly the elevator stops at the shuttle bay, as they all pile out and scan the area. As they were scanning the area, they saw the Clone Shepard step out behind cover, now clad in N7 Armor, holding an N7 Hurricane. Shepard commented,

"Well, that's creepy." The clone opened fire as they fired back and hid behind cover. The Clone shouted behind cover,

"You want to stop shooting up my ship!"

Shepard responded, "It's not your ship!"

The Clone shouted with pride, "It will be! I've taken your name, your Spectre Rank, even your fingerprints!"

Shepard got out of cover, "And then you left me to die; only I didn't. You think fake fingerprints are going to fool the Council or Hackett?!" He went to the Clone's cover, but he wasn't there and asked,

"How's the fake plan looking now?" He didn't the Clone attempted to charge him with his Omni-Blade, when he was about to strike, Walker blocked it with his Energy Sword as he said to the Clone,

"Round Twoâ€¦..without 'Mdama Rage." He picked the Clone up and hurled him to where he took cover. Brooks came out with an N7 Crusader saying over the comm,

"Hatchet Squad to the Shuttle Bay!" She fired her shotgun at the Spartan who immediately took cover. Walker shouted,

"Grayson, Wenrum, Get your Suppressors ready and set on incapacitate!"

Tanner, Davenport, Equip your Lightrifles, aim for any CAT6 Soldier and set to kill! I'm going to assist Shepard in taking out the Clone!" A series of Green lights and one blue light winked and they were all going to work. Walker assisted Shepard as he used a biotic throw on one of the Soldiers while his shields were down. Walker contacted Murphy,

"Murphy, are you speeding behind us?"

Murphy replied, _"Affirmative, Commander, Joker and Cortez have overridden the Skycar's safety so they could obstruct the Normandy and keep it from leaving."_

Joker said in shock, _"Plan B stands for bait!?"_

Murphy chuckled, _"And if I have the tactical advantage, I'll open fire on the Normandy."_

Joker asked, _"Butâ€|THAT'S A DROPSHIP!"_

Cortez spoke, _"It has a laser and it's outfitted for full combat pursuit."_

Joker was frantic, _"Don't SHOOT DOWN MY SHIP!"_

Murphy shouted, _"Relax, Joker, I'm only going to pump enough firepower in that corvette to simply make sure it doesn't leave."_

Shepard couldn't help but laugh at the argument that Joker is having with Murphy, nor could Walker. The Clone tried to surprise the Spartan with an Omni-Blade attack, but with Walker's reaction time, he managed to block it with his Energy Sword and kick the Clone to the ground. The Clone shouted,

"I'm COMMANDER SHEPARD!"

Shepard replied, "Are you kidding me? Conrad Verner is better at being me than you are!" Walker remembered Shepard telling him about that crazed fan who always wants to prove himself for three years. Until he gave him his doctoral dissertation on Xeno-technology about Dark Energy also blocked a bullet that was from a Cerberus sleeper agent, only to be saved by a woman named Jenna who sabotaged the agent's gun. As the firefight raged on, Cortez came on the line,

"_Moving in, Commander, Murphy is coming in from the rear. Damn that bird is fast."_

Joker and Cortez's Skycar moved into position to block the Normandy from getting clear of the Nebula. The Clone was actually getting agitated on what was going on.

"What the hell's going on? Get us out of the Nebula and jump to FTL!"

The CAT6 Pilot replied, "We can't, a Skycar keeps blocking our path!"

The Clone yelled, "THEN SHOOT IT!"

The Pilot followed the Clone's orders and began to shoot at the Skycar, Joker decided to sideseat drive,

"We need to stay within thirty degrees of the nose to block course plotting."

Cortez replied, "That makes us a perfect target!"

Joker corrected, "No, that makes us the bait, do you want me to drive?"

Cortez answered, "No, We just need to give Murphy a good shot at the engines to slow the ship down."

Back inside the ship, the Clone decided that trying to shoot the car isn't going anywhere, "Damn it, Launch the shuttle and blow that thing out of the sky!"

The bay door opened to launch the shuttle—which was immediately blown out of the sky by a crimson red laser, the Clone yelled,

"NO!"

Murphy said over the comm, _"Shuttle destroyed! Lieutenant TJ Murphy in position to fire on Normandy."_

Shepard came on the comm, "I can't believe I'm saying this. Lieutenant, Open Fire, hit one of the engines only."

Murphy replied, _"Target engine of my choosing in sight. Countdown to firing: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, Firing Spartan Laser!"_ The Ship shook violently as the CAT6 pilot said,

"We've lost an engine, that laser cut through the barriers like they weren't there; we can't clear the Nebula like this!"

Walker stepped forward to the Clone who looked like he was on the verge of a rage, "Give up, Clone. Its over!" The Clone looked at the Spartan, "You! You and your Damn Spartans ruined everything! And now, it's just you and me. Shepard is no longer my priority now, it's now you!"

Walker pulled out his Energy Sword hilt, "Only a Covie would deal in absolutes, it's time to end this." He ignited his Energy Sword as the Clone activated his Omni-Blade as they duelled the second time in the Shuttle Bay. The Clone and Walker locked their blades together as the Clone said,

"You have ruined my plans, Monster!"

Walker replied, "Nice nickname for me." Walker pushed towards the Clone as he leapt and drop kicked the Clone, knocking him off balance. They locked their blades again as the Clone yelled,

"You will never be stronger than me!"

Walker replied calmly, "Yet, you can't succeed at killing a Spartan with your fake plan." Walker pushed towards the left of the Clone as

he de-activated his Energy Sword and threw a series of light punches at the Clone.

The Clone threw a Biotic Throw at the Spartan-IV as he easily dodged it. The Clone tried to use a Biotic Singularity on Walker, but it was repelled back at him, thanks to the Prefect Armor's Manipulator system. The Singularity made the Clone stumble back because his shields were still up and attempted to use a Biotic Warp on Walker, but the Spartan implemented a Hardlight Shield that blocked the Warp. The Clone charged at the Spartan with his Omni-Blade ignited and said,

"I'm the Normandy's Captain!"

Walker charged with his Energy Sword in hand, "The Wrong type of Captain." As they both collided, the Spartan punched the Clone in the chest, but he put too much oomph in it as they were both tumbling out of the Shuttle bay and onto the ramp. The Clone was now on top as he punched the Spartan in the helmet, no collateral damage was inflicted. The Spartan kicked the Clone off as he attempted to stand, but the Pelican flew into the hanger along with the Skycar. The shockwave had both the Clone and the Spartan hanging over the edge. The Clone looked at the Spartan and said,

"Look at you and your loyalty to Shepard. What makes him so damn special? Why him and not me?"

The Spartan looked at him, "Because he has a loyal attitude for his crew and his friends. Unlike you, who claimed to be a Lone Wolf, Shepard works with a team. And for Spartan Teams like Noble back in my universe, that Lone Wolf stuff stays behind."

Shepard and his crew ran up to Walker as they had Spartan Grayson pull him up. The Clone looked inside the hanger and saw Brooks turn away from him. Grayson asked Shepard,

"What about this Flash Clone?" Shepard was up with the decision to either kill the Clone or save him. Shepard decided to do a compassionate way rather than having revenge, he held out his hand,

"Here, take my hand." The Clone asked, "And then?" Shepard replied giving him a realization, "And then you live." The Clone asked in defeat, "For what?" He purposely let go, but didn't fall too far as he was lifted up by Spartan Walker as he finished,

"For you to stand trial."

The Spartan set the Clone down between Davenport and Tanner as they got back into the hanger. Walker spoke to his sniper,

"Get something to hold him."

Davenport replied, "Yes, Commander." Grayson handed Walker a collar, "Liara gave me this 'Biotic Inhibitor' just in case you intended on capturing him." Walker nodded and placed the collar around the Clone's neck while Davenport returned with a pair of Tech handcuffs. Walker joined Shepard as Cortez said,

"Fortunately, they weren't here long enough to do much real damage."

Although, I may need some help from James cleaning up the damage to shuttle bay, as well as making a more official room for the Pelican to land in. I saw it land in a tight spot, but a little remodeling will never hurt."

Joker spoke, "Well, they overloaded the Heat Diffusion System firing at us. Not sure if you noticed, but Shuttle-guy here did some crazy stunt flying to keep us in one piece."

Cortez stated, "It's nice to fly something more maneuverable than the Kodiak."

Murphy hopped out of the Pelican's Cockpit, "If you want more maneuverable, the YSS-100 Sabre Fighters and F-41 Broadsword Fighters back in our universe were more maneuverable. Damn good fighters."

Wenrum looked over Normandy systems, _"Shipboard construct designation: EDI is now in control of Normandy systems."_

Shepard asked, "What about the mercs?"

Joker replied, "Just one crappy ass pilot, your clone and her." He pointed to Brooks who was in custody by Spartan Grayson. "Alliance is taking her to a high security facility; maybe they could give them some dirt on Cerberus.

Brooks looked at her cuffs and said, "I'd be more than happy to cooperate with your policies."

Shepard said with a suspicious tone, "Maya, I know that voice."

Brooks asked, "Do you really?" The Commander walked up to her, "You're getting a chance to redeem yourself. Don't waste it."

Spartan Grayson gestured to Spartan Davenport as he saw Brooks hacking her cuffs as Brooks said,

"So serious, admit it, some of you liked having me around. Looking up to the legend." The Commander turned his back on Brooks as she said,

"We've had some laughs. And who knows? Maybe we'll have more someday. You know you'll miss me." She hacked her cuffs as she began to run. All of a sudden, a blue light struck Brooks in the back as she fell over, Shepard turned around to see Spartan Davenport holding a Binary Rifle that sported a blue glow to it instead of orange. She said,

"Set it to incapacitate, she'll wake up in a cell soon enough."

Joker got on the comm, "Maintenance to the Shuttle Bay."

* * *

><p>As the Normandy docked back in the hanger where it was receiving a retrofit, it was surrounded by C-Sec agents, Shepard said to

Walker,<p>

"There are C-Sec Officers at the docks, there's no point on hiding now."

Walker nodded, "Wenrum also acknowledges our situation. We'll explain everything to C-Sec and if they need proof, we could show them our helmet recordings or allow an Asari to mind-meld with either myself, my Spartans or Murphy."

Shepard asked, "And Wenrum?" Wenrum explained, _"I will explain to them that I mean them no harm unless they have an intention to harm the Reclaimers."_

Walker asked Shepard, "And your clone?" Shepard replied, "Like you said, he'll stand trial." Cortez came up to the three along with the rest of the Spartans and Murphy, "The rest of the squad is waiting outside. We'll have the Normandy back in shape in no time." He looked at the UNSC group, "Plus we have to welcome you guys to the crew." The Shuttle bay door opened up revealing C-Sec officers and the rest of Shepard's crew as they were getting out of a C-Sec shuttle. The Officers had their Assault Rifles trained on the Spartans and the Promethean when a Turian Captain said,

"Stand down; these are the ones that we were told about!" The Captain approached the squad, "Commander Shepard, one of your teammates came to C-Sec and warn us about a hijacking of the Normandy. Ex-detective Garrus Vakarian told us that you and a squad of Super-Soldiers and a Combat AI construct took the Normandy." He looked at the Spartans and Promethean, "I take it that these are the soldiers and the AI?"

Walker asked aware of the AI paranoia, "You're not going to terminate Wenrum, are you?"

The Captain turned to the Spartan, although he had to look up, "That depends if it's hostile."

The Promethean approached, _"I will not appear as a hostile force, if I were to attack it will be if anyone shows aggression towards the Reclaimers."_

The Captain asked, "Reclaimersâ€¦as in the Super-Soldiers?" The Promethean gestured his gun arm to Murphy and spoke, _"Their marine is also a Reclaimer."_ The Captain finished, "Then I should report this to the Executor, he'll tell our officers to not fire on youâ€¦.." Wenrum spoke, _"Wenrum. Named after Salarian romance tale."_ The Captain nodded and left but was stopped by Walker as escorting the captured Clone Shepard and said,

"Take this to the C-Sec holding cells and make sure he stands trial for what he did."

The Captain was shocked judging by his mandibles because he was seeing two Shepards; he took the Clone and said,

"We'll tag him and send him to a holding cell."

Walker looked as the Captain took the Clone into a C-Sec Shuttle as he watched as Shepard's crew exited the Normandy, Tali said,

"Worst Shore Leave ever."

Walker sighed about Shore Leave to a fact that he spent most of his life fighting the Covenant, developing 'Mdama Rage, getting a break from fighting after the war until he became a Spartan-IV. Nowâ€¦..it was nice for a bunch of Spartans to get a well, deserved rest from fighting.

A/N Soâ€¦I can't believe I just made a backstory for Walker. His rage of Vengeance was all because of Jul'Mdama, the Leader of the Covenant Remnant. He was working to try and take him downâ€¦..he lost himself to rage and believed that anyone he's fighting is Jul'Mdama.

Ah, what the heck. But now the Spartans can now explore the Silversun Strip for a while until Shepard plans a partyâ€¦..as well as welcome the Spartans, Murphy and Wenrum to the Normandy.

**But what will happen when the Spartans enter the Armax Arsenal Arena and decide to switch it to what they are used to in Infinity Simulator? Tune in next time. **

6. Armax Arsenal Arena

So, now the Citadel knows that the Spartans and the Promethean exist. Finally, the Spartans go off to have an actual shore leave. But what would they get themselves into?

Chapter 6: Armax Arsenal Arena

As Shepard, his team and Fireteam Crimson returned to his apartment with Wenrum trailing behind, Joker stated,

"So after a hard day spent fighting an evil clone, you know what comes next?"

Shepard asked, "A nap?"

Wenrum stepped in, _"Jeff means that you should hold a celebration on a proper break from service."_

Wrex spoke, "Well, I gotta get going. I gotta lot of things to settle before I head back to Tuchanka. All the fires to put out when you're in charge, right?" As he was leaving, "Let me know if you wanna hang out or have that party." Joker yelled, "See ya."

Wenrum looked at the architecture around the Apartment, _"Commander, if you allow it, My Watcher wants to make things more accommodating for the Reclaimers, should they intend to remove their combat skins."_

Shepard asked, "What do you mean by 'accommodating' for the Reclaimers?"

The Watcher was released as it flew over by the downstairs bed, it flashed a blue envelope erasing part of the wall near one side of the bed and a circular object materialized near the opening. The Spartans knew all too well what that was as Spartan Walker spoke,

"It's one of the rigs designed to equip and remove our Mjolnir suits. How did you know about those?"

Wenrum shrugged, _"The Watcher scanned your armor while you were unconscious. Your memory showed these rigs and the Watcher added it to its constructing data."_

Shepard accepted these accommodations for the Spartans and spoke, "Make three more of those." Wenrum acknowledged as his Watcher built three more rigs in three separate areas of the apartment. Wenrum motioned his Watcher, _"Go to Armax Arsenal Arena and construct four rigs, so in case the Reclaimers want to 'blow off steam' in the simulator as most humans put it."_

Spartan Tanner asked in excitement, "They have a simulator here?!"

Shepard replied, "Yeah, they do." He asked the Promethean, "But if the Watcher is going to build more of those rigs, how will the Spartan's armors get to them?"

Wenrum spoke as he pulled up a map, _"The Watcher has equipped the storage rigs with a teleportation system similar to my own. If the pieces are not in the storage unit, the rigs will glow red, but if the pieces are accounted for, the rigs will glow green for 'ready to use.' The Reclaimers can call their combat skin pieces by pressing the blue call button on the rig."_

Grayson realized, "It's a slipspace teleportation link with the apartment and the arena. The storage rigs that your Watcher built have slipspace abilities to it. Allowing us to call our armors over to us by pressing the call button on the rigs. Very smart for a Promethean."

Shepard spoke, "Spartans, go check out the arena while I handle setting up for this party. A lot of people would like to see your combat skills in action."

The Spartans saluted and left the apartment. Tanner asked,

"I wonder what he meant by a lot of people wanting to see our skills in action?"

Walker replied, "Who knows, if it's like Infinity's Battle Simulator, we should enjoy it."

Davenport asked, "If not?"

Grayson spoke, "Then the Watcher and I will have to get creative on making it look like Infinity's Battle Simulator." The group entered the elevator leading down to the Strip. As they moved across the strip, they noticed a lot of people giving them a stare of shock and amazement. The Spartans and the Watcher soon came to the Armax Arsenal Arena, which was right across from the Apartment. Spartan Walker said,

"Well, this is convenient, having the arena just across from the apartment." He looked at the Watcher and then at his teammates and said, "Lets head in."

* * *

><p>They entered the arena while still noticing the many people staring at them as they made their way to find a suitable place for the Watcher to build the rigs. They saw a gate that was glowing red leading downstairs, Walker realized,<p>

"That area must be for Athletes only. But we are soldiers forged from the fires of warâ€|.well a three decade war to be precise." He spoke to his team, "We should register ourselves for the simulator if we are going to get in there."

Grayson pointed to a VI that has a Female Turian Avatar, "We should be able to register ourselves at the local Dumb AI terminal." So Fireteam Crimson spoke to the VI and it registered them into their systems. They were now able to access the Athlete area; they approached a control panel as Grayson said,

"This control panel must control the options on which game to choose."

Tanner replied, "Finally, I'm itching for some action!"

Davenport spoke, "Easy, Josh, this isn't something we want to rush. Besides it's only set for only a few scenarios."

Walker worked the controls, "I'll start the first scenario now. Crimson, let's get to work."

The Spartans walked over to the lockers when they saw an armor station and weapons bench, Walker looked at the Watcher and said,

"This looks like a good place for the rigs. Watcher, begin constructing the rigs."

The Watcher nodded as it fired a blue envelope near the weapons bench, constructing a rig and it did the same for the other three as the Spartans entered the elevator to the simulator.

As they entered the simulator, they heard an announcer, _"Ladies and Gentleman, Its Combat Night at the Armax Arsenal Arena!"_

Walker and his team looked around as the 'Wingman' stage booted up until he said, "Weapons Ready, Spartans!" Walker had his MA5D Assault Rifle out while Grayson had his Forerunner Suppressor, Davenport had her SRS99 AM Sniper Rifle, and Tanner was dual-wielding two M7/Caseless SMGs.

They all stood ready to see if any enemies would come to their position until the announcer counted down, _"5, 4, 3, 2, 1."_

After the countdown ended, there was gunfire and Fireteam Crimson got to work, Walker set the arena to Wingman and added the Cerberus enemy to the area. He and his team had to find out if it's similar to Infinity's Firefight Scenario of its simulator. They all chose their weapons for this round, so they could get a feel in combat like back on Infinity. Walker saw the Cerberus Soldiers charging at them and said,

"Let's go!" Walker killed a Cerberus Soldier with a few short controlled bursts from his MA5D while Grayson and Tanner unleashed their weapons on two more of the holographic soldiers as they switched to their next targets.

Davenport sniped a few Cerberus Soldiers while switching to every position so she wouldn't make herself an easy target as well as switching from her SRS99 to the Binary Rifle. Fireteam Crimson heard a '_killstreak_' get announced and after that they had to kill the enemy within the allotted time to continue the killstreak. After killing all of the enemies, the announcer spoke,

"_Round 1 is over._" The Spartan Team cheered at this success before Walker said, "We're not out of the woods yet. This match is just getting started." Tanner saw a blue orb appear next to him, he grabbed it as a word appeared saying, 'Bonus Points' He spoke,

"Guys, there is a blue orb that appears at the end of every round; these orbs are for bonus points!"

"Nice work, Josh, We'll keep that in mind." noted Walker.

Round 2 was beginning as they got to position and prepared for combat. When the countdown reached zero, a new wave of Cerberus forces emerged. Davenport picked off a few troopers that now had shields, but those were no match for her SRS99 AM Sniper Rifle. But she had to warn the others,

"Commander, we have Centurions in the battle zone and they have shields."

Walker replied, "Nice work, Lucy. Let's take them down. Grayson, have any tech attacks picked up from either Garrus or Tali?"

Grayson brought out a disk shaped mine, "Garrus gave me and Davenport a couple of proximity mines while Tali upgraded the Raider to emit an overload pulse on enemy shields and it can be initiated from a distance if need be."

Walker spoke, "We better thank them later." He was unaware that a Cerberus Centurion almost had the jump on him, but thanks to his Spartan senses, he smacked the trooper's shock baton away and brought his Hard-light daggers down on the trooper.

Walker ordered, "Davenport, Grayson, set up a couple of proximity mines near that pass. It could give them a good surprise when they move towards us. Grayson, use an Overload on the Centurions when they appear and Tanner would sneak behind and take them down."

As soon as they set up, the Cerberus troops moved in as the Centurions moved in towards the Spartans as they crossed the mine field. The mines that Grayson and Davenport planted exploded killing a couple of Assault Troopers and damaging the shields of a few Centurions. Tanner used his Spartan abilities and his SMGs on the Centurions which killed the group of Cerberus forces. Tanner signaled thumbs up until his shields flared up indicating that he was under fire. There were a few more enemies left, mostly Centurions that survived the previous attack. Davenport killed a Centurion with her

Binary Rifle while Walker gunned down a Centurion using his MA5D Assault Rifle. Grayson managed to sneak behind a Centurion and overload its shields which caused splash damage to the other Centurions. Grayson fired his Forerunner Suppressor into two Centurions while Walker killed the last one with his MA5D.

"_Round 2 is over."_ The Announcer spoke as the last enemy falls. Walker couldn't help, but hear a crowd cheering for them as Tanner collected the Bonus Points icon. Crimson formed up as Walker said,

"One more round left, I get the feeling that one more combatant in the Cerberus squad would show up."

Grayson remembered, "There are Cerberus Snipers in the final round. There are most likely shielded."

Davenport reloaded her Binary Rifle, "It will take more than that to drop us."

Tanner holstered his SMGs as he pulled out his Lightrifle, "Need backup?"

Walker noticed this and prioritized the targets as he turned to Davenport, "The Targets will be the Cerberus Snipers, you and Tanner will take down the Snipers while Grayson and I eliminate the rest of the soldiers just to lure them out and draw the soldiers away from you two. Does that sound like a plan?" Three green lights winked as the Fireteam got into position, and set up for the final round.

Walker looked at Grayson as he asked while reloading his MA5D, "Ready for some fun, Alex?" Grayson reloaded his Suppressor, "Ready to suppress, John. I'm always ready to suppress."

The announcer began the countdown until the round began. After the countdown finished, Walker and Grayson went to work fighting off the remaining Cerberus soldiers in the area. They saw a red light being sighted on them until the Sniper was shot and disintegrated by Davenport while Tanner killed another Sniper.

Walker and Grayson knew for certain that they have Davenport and Tanner watching their backs for the final round. As they kept earning killstreaks, their score multiplied throughout the match as long as they keep killing enemy soldiers. Grayson kept up as he overloaded the shields on the Centurions while gunning down Assault Troopers. Walker used his Manipulator system to send a Cerberus soldier flying off the battle area. He used his Hard-Light Daggers on the Troopers that were in close proximity with him and Grayson.

As for Davenport, she was having a good rerun of Sniper Alley, but this time, she was the sniper while the enemy runs towards the target. Each Cerberus Sniper that popped up would get disintegrated by her and her Binary Rifle. Tanner wasn't much of a sharpshooter with a Sniper Rifle, but was more of a sharpshooter with precision based weapons like the DMR, Covenant Carbine and the Lightrifle. Tanner would spot another Cerberus Sniper and take it down while Davenport takes out the other. Although they would have to move to different areas for a perfect shot and not to give away their position, Tanner would use one of his SMGs to take out any soldiers

in their path to get to another sniping area. The duo heard the voice say

"_Maximum Killstreak!_"

Although they heard that in the past two rounds, it did mean that their score multiplied because of what all four of them did and what they always do when it comes to a battle simulator. They continued sniping the remaining Cerberus Soldiers until the last one fell. The match ended as the team formed up as Walker asked,

"Are you guys seeing this on your HUDs?"

Grayson replied, "Yeah, our score reached the 9999 limit."

Davenport looked at her HUD, "Holy Crap, we just scored big time."

Tanner noted, "Well, another good day to be a Spartan."

When they were on the elevator that leads back to the locker room, the Spartans were waiting for the elevator to reach the locker rooms. They couldn't believe how slow it was going; even with all the advanced tech in this alternate universe they still couldn't build a faster elevator! Until Tanner pulled out his SMGs, which had the safeties on and started banging them against each other as he made a beat music sound as he continued, he soon said,

"MC Joshie." He beat boxed as he banged the SMGs together, "MC waka waka!"

Lucy clapped two SRS99 magazines to the beat while Alex tapped his Suppressor to the side of the elevator while John used an MA5D magazine and tapped it against his Assault Rifle to the beat. Tanner had the beat while they were using the rhythm for the elevator wait. They were basically having an after-battle musical on the elevator ride due to boredom of waiting on the elevator. (Get the reference?)

* * *

><p>Once the elevator stopped and opened the doors, the Spartans walked into the locker room as they went to the newly-built rigs after storing their weapons in their lockers. All four Spartans got on the rigs; they activated and moved to a 30 degree angle as the mechanism on the rigs began to unscrew the areas which the armor pieces connect with the under-suits. Once the helmets, chest-pieces, greaves and gauntlets came off, they were all stored into the rigs. The now unarmored Spartans were walking towards the options panel when the two Asari that were coincidentally standing by the elevator when the Spartans first arrived were awestruck, one said,<p>

"That's what they look like underneath their armor?"

The other spoke, "Theirâ€|humanâ€|yet they just scored at the 9999 limit in the arena, and it was their first time here."

Tanner poked his head into the locker room saying, "That's what Spartans do, ladies." Walker's arm grabbed Tanner as he pulled him out.

Grayson looked over at the control panel as he said, "Guys, so far it's only suitable for Firefight modes. But I've been digging through the memory chip from my armor and discovered a few things."

Walker asked, "What was in the memory chip?" Grayson plugged in the chip, "It's the scenarios for Gruntpocalypse, Grifball, Capture the Flag, Race, Slayer and Flood. I remember copying these from the Infinity Battle Simulator during our time at Requiem. I even have Ragnarok, Solace and Exile maps as well."

Davenport asked, "We should notify the arena staff that we want to add a couple of competitive scenarios to the simulator."

Grayson nodded, "But the simulator will have to be modified to hold this type of competitive and Firefight matches. If the leader dies its game over, we need to modify it to work at an Infinity level."

Walker noticed the flashing mailbox sign, "Guys, brace yourselves for the fan-mail." He pressed the mailbox sign as a message screen appeared with the first message entitled 'Super-Soldiers',

"_Spartans,_"

I've heard about you guys. You four made quite the impression of yourselves when C-Sec revealed that Commander Shepard has four Super-Soldiers in his squad. But seeing you guys in your first battle in the simulator was unforgettable. I couldn't even believe my eyes when your leader sent that soldier flying without any source of biotics. You guys are the best in this arena and alongside Shepard, it would be unstoppable.

A Surprised fan."

Walker looked at another message saying, 'To The Raider from your new fan',

"_The Raider,_"

You are the most technical of the four, you deal with overloads, strategizing and you even fix a few things. I hope you got this message because I've had bad luck most of the time until you showed up andâ€¦|brighten up my life. It's like we were meant to be.

Your secret admirer."

Walker face-palmed, "I guess you have an admirer, Alex." Grayson shrugged, "Fans, what can you do?" Walker noticed a final message saying 'I can't believe you beat my score'

"_From James Vega,_"

_So I set up this message to send to anyone who could beat my score. But I never thought it would be you four Spartans. I'll admit you guys have done a hell of a lot of stuff in your history. So much that it would make others want to say 'Holy Crap' but your history, your origins, hell Your Reality is something out of the ordinary. But along with this message, I also made a message to Walker, Liara asked

for you to meet her at the strip. She seems very open to you after you told her about those Forerunners._

Your buddy, James Vega"

Walker was shocked about that message as Tanner said, "Well, the Asari Scientist wants to see you."

Walker nodded as he said, "You guys worry about updating the arena, and I have to go see Liara."

Davenport spoke, "Good Luck on your date." Walker nodded as he left although the three Spartans heard a lot of thuds in the spectator area.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile at the Apartment, Shepard gathered all of the party decorations as Wenrum asked, "Commander, I am currently at a disadvantage on the guest list. But who should you invite?"

Shepard looked at the Promethean, "Wellâ€|.we can't get too ahead of ourselves. Besides, I'll send out the invitations until I know that I'm ready to start the party."

Wenrum nodded as Glyph approached, "Wenrum, I received word that Fireteam Crimson has reached the top score in the Armax Arsenal Arena. I was also informed that they wish to update the simulator with a few scenarios that the Spartans are familiar with."

Wenrum asked, _"Any other information?"_ Glyph responded, "Not at this moment. Do you require anything else?" Wenrum shook his head as the drone left, Shepard guessed,

"I guess they are proving themselves in front of the audience in the arenaâ€|.and they want to add a few more scenarios to the simulator." Wenrum replied, _"It's something that reminds them of home."_

Shepard had to ask, "That's where you come from as well?"

Wenrum replied, _"Yes."_ Shepard asked, "What were you doing before you came here with the Spartans?"

The Promethean responded, _"Following the wishes of the Didact's Hand or as the Reclaimer calls him, 'Jul 'Mdama'. I was on Requiem, an artificial world that was built by my makers. It was known as a 'Shield World' those that would seek refuge from the Firing of the Halo Array."_

Shepard realized, "You were once their enemy?"

Wenrum pulled his outer arms out, _"I was once their enemy until the final battle of Requiem when I was defending the Slipspace Anchor, the same one that brought them here, the leader of the team killed me. Upon my death and data purge, the very bits of me that were close to the anchor latched on to it and when the crossing occurred, I came along with the Reclaimers. I was disconnected to the anchor and my body was reformed and I was 'reborn'. After my rebirth, I no longer

felt my master's hold."_

Shepard placed the pieces together, "So, Walker killed you, close to the Artifact on the artificial world, the pieces of you latched onto the artifact and you followed them here?" The Promethean nodded as Shepard finished, "And you realized that you are now a free Promethean?" Wenrum acknowledged,

"_Freedom from the Didact, Jul'Mdama and the rest of his meddlers, No longer feeling an essential protocolâ€¦is something out of the ordinary for me to experience. It's 'free will' as most sentient species call it. Now my loyalties are to the Reclaimers, including you, Commander."_

Shepard asked, "Are you calling me a Reclaimer?" Wenrum nodded, "_Your history is most unique like the Spartans, your physical evolution and where you spent most of your life is what shaped you into who you are. You have the privilege to be called Reclaimer."_

The Commander replied, "I grew up on Starships most of my life because both my parents were in the Navy. I discovered my Biotic Powers when I was a child; I got angry when a group of pirates used me as leverage to get to my parents. I just disarmed them using my powers and ran towards a squad of Alliance Soldiers who were looking for me. When I got older, I enlisted into the Alliance Marines."

The Promethean processed that information and nodded as Shepard asked, "How were you made?" That question made Wenrum drop his head as he spoke,

"_I was created through 'The Composer', a device that bridges the Organic and Digital Realms."_

Shepard remembered, "I remember Walker telling Liara about that. He said it was used to imprison and transform its victims into Knights."

Wenrum nodded, "_I don't remember what I was before the Composer, but that will come eventually."_

* * *

><p>As Spartan Walker left the Arena, he went over to the rendezvous where Liara was standing. He moved to her side as the Asari noticed him and seeing him without his armor, she asked,<p>

"So that's what you really look like without all the pieces?" Walker nodded, "Wenrum's Watcher made sure of it."

Liara looked up at the strip and asked, "What is your universe like?" Walker replied, "I never been able to describe it that well, but my universe is trying to pull itself out of the ashes because of the war. Then the Destruction of New Phoenix back on my Earth, the Requiem Campaign and trying to deal with the Storm, the Covenant Remnant. But when it was not in chaos, it had 800 human colonies before the war and so far, we have been terra forming destroyed colonies in order to make them sustain life once again. Our navy is reconstructing the UNSC fleets, more Spartans are made and more soldiers are enlisting."

Liara asked, although she was shocked at the 800 human colonies, "What did you do most of the time before you became a Spartan?" Walker replied, "Like I said, I was once a Marine. But sometimes during times when I was Off-Duty, I would just sit on the beach of any world that I was stationed at and simply watch the sunset. It was very peaceful, bright, covie-free€|.." He looked at Liara, "Beautiful."

The Asari replied, "I see." The Spartan continued, "But when I was set to guard excavation sites, a group of Scientists would show up in Lab Coats or Armed to the Teeth with UNSC Marine Armor. I was interested in Scientists who fight back because it shows that even eggheads can fight."

Liara noticed, "I guess many scientists were examples of defending themselves." Walker nodded, "I read their Dossiers and some of them had basic training. But you held out on your own for 53 years while diving into dig sites trying to discover what happened to the Protheans. So far, Liara, you are at the top of the most combat capable scientists."

Liara smiled, "I would be a terrible archeologist if I didn't know the dangers. I wouldn't be where I am without them."

The Spartan smiled back as he said, "And your 'biotics' your telekinetic power, helped you out as well."

Liara noted, "My biotics are capable enough, I also trained in small arms like pistols and submachine guns. It was enough for me to study Prothean dig sites and defend myself when attacked."

Walker chuckled, "Palmer would've loved you." Liara asked, "Who?" Walker thought back, "Spartan Sarah Palmer, leader of the Spartan-IVs on Infinity. A Commander like myself, although I always tend to get on her nerves most of the time."

Liara became curious, "What have you been doing to get on her nerves?" The Spartan looked to the Asari, "I was always sympathetic to the scientists that I escorted. I always told her that I'm not always there for killing Covenant; I was also there to help the scientists which she called, 'eggheads.' Palmer made me the leader of Fireteam Crimson and paired me with Alex, Lucy, and Josh because they were like me. They never cared about listening to Palmer and her 'No Science' order for Spartans; only on rare occasions, we would listen to her. During Requiem, I realized that we had to go above Palmer's orders. And sometimes it could land us in some strange situations like, my team on the Citadel."

Liara was at a loss of the Spartan's story of always getting on Palmer's nerves even though they were the same rank. Despite his entire history of his universe, the Forerunners and the Covenant, he was always mischievous of getting on Palmer's nerves, always playing by his own rules because he doesn't agree with Palmer's. Now that his squad is on their own, he's changed into a calm, commanding and sensible human almost like Shepard. Liara now wanted to ask about a particular system in the Spartan's Prefect armor,

"When the clone used his biotics on you, you slapped them back towards him. You even used it to lift him up after he let go of the

loading ramp back on the Normandy. What did you use to do that?"

Walker described his manipulator system, "Its Forerunner technology extracted from Forerunner weapons and from the knowledge of a few dead Promethean Knights. The manipulator system allows the user to use a telekinetic power for uses like throwing a grenade back at the enemy or using your foe as a ragdoll. The Prefect was upgraded with the manipulator system after one of my first missions with the armor. What could I do than put that system to good use." All of a sudden, his comm system rang as he asked,

"Can you give me a minute?" The Asari nodded as Walker turned on his comm, "Hello?"

Grayson was on the other line, "John, We got the Infinity scenarios up and running at the arena." Walker asked, "Are you serious, Alex?"

Grayson stated the obvious, "I wouldn't be calling you if I wasn't serious."

Walker asked, "Anyone trying out the scenarios?" Grayson replied, "We got two teams duking it out in Slayer, Ragnarok. One team is called the 'Edmonton Blood Dragons' and the other team is called the 'Rhode Island Reckoner Knights' heated rivals in the battle simulator for years in this universe."

Walker realized what was going on and decided, "I'm on my way." He turned his comm off as he spoke with Liara,

"Grayson managed to upgrade the arena and add a few battle scenarios that my team and I are familiar with. I need to go check it out."

Liara nodded as she replied, "Iâ€|understand." The Spartan turned to walk back to the arena until the Asari Scientist stopped him for a moment and said,

"Despite your history, your knowledge, and your curiosity to scientists, you are a good soldier."

Walker nodded again until Liara brought him into a surprise hug. This was surprising for someone to hug a Spartan, but to him it was a feeling that he had not felt in years since Jul killed his parents.

* * *

><p>At the Armax Arena, Grayson and the rest of Team Crimson cracked down hard on the arena, they modified the simulator to Infinity size, added the new scenarios to the simulator including Invasion, the Spartan's called the Watcher to modify the simulator entrance elevator to hold a whole team and added the choice between competitive free-for-all, team battle and Firefight. After the two teams were finished with the Dragons emerging victorious, they teleported all the teams back to the elevator. The teleportation system is when combatants are teleported into the arena when the match begins. It is also used as a respawning system for when a player 'dies' in the simulator.<p>

When a player dies, a stasis field will emerge locking the player in place as he or she is teleported to a respawn point. Grayson also added vehicles to the battle arena so if the competitors want to go mobile and fight, they would need vehicles. The vehicles were actually mixed between UNSC, Covenant and Alliance vehicles.

The Warthog and its variants were added to the simulator alongside the Alliance M-35 Mako and M-44 Hammerhead. The Scorpion Tank, the Covenant Wraith and the Mantis mech were also added to the battle simulator and those three heavy hitters instantly became a favorite amongst the teams who prefer heavy weaponry.

Grayson added the UNSC UH-144 Falcon, AV-14 Hornet, Covenant Banshee Fighter, the Alliance A-61 Mantis Gunship and F-61 Trident fighter for a thrill of a Dogfight as well as a special Dogfight scenario to boost the hype. Grayson looked over at his work and smiled,

"Feels like home." He soon turned around to see Walker entering the athlete area as the Tech Expert noticed,

"You're blushing, John. Did something happen on your date?" Walker replied, "Well, you know, I was hugged by Liara."

Grayson chuckled, "That's amusing." Walker now asked, "All of the scenarios are in?"

Davenport approached, "That's affirmative and the teams that tried out the new scenarios are in the locker room."

Tanner finished, "We also chose a volunteer from each team to go into a Gruntocalypse scenario with one of us. We recommended you to join the two volunteers."

Walker realized, "Well, I guess I better suit up." The Spartan moved to the locker room where the Dragons and the Knights assembled. Walker heard one of the Dragons say, "Hey, check it out."

A Knight looked at Walker as he was suiting up on the rig and looked at the Dragon, "No way, a Spartan?!"

Another Knight spoke, "For real? Those two are being accompanied by a Spartan?" A Dragon replied, "Its real man, a Spartan is joining our volunteers."

After getting suited up in the Prefect Armor, Walker grabbed his DMR and his Magnum and made his way into the now larger elevator with a Blood Dragon and a Reckoner Knight waiting for him. He asked,

"Are you two guys, the volunteers that Grayson told me about?" The Dragon and the Knight saluted as the Dragon spoke,

"Yes sir, I'm Peter Dixon, I'm the sniper of the Blood Dragons." The Knight spoke, "Samuel Pierce, the Reckoner Knight's Marksman."

The Spartan nodded as he introduced himself, "John Walker, Leader of Fireteam Crimson." As he closed the elevator door, turned to Dixon and Pierce,

"You both know what scenario this is?"

Dixon replied, "Gruntpocalypseâ€¦.right?" Walker nodded, "Welcome to Gruntpocalypse, you two. If you are to stay alive out there, you need to know the basics of what this Firefight scenario is about."

Pierce asked, "We kill the enemies, right?" Walker answered, "It might seem like that for you guys, but Gruntpocalypse is different."

Dixon asked, "How different?" Walker stood back as a holographic image of an Unggoy emerged,

"This is the enemy of the scenario. There will be a whole lot of Grunts out there. Don't let their size fool you, Grunts can use heavy weapons and can move as suicide squads. If you see a Grunt running towards you with two blue lights in its hands, shoot it before it reaches you."

Pierce asked, "So these 'Grunts' move in packs?" The Spartan nodded, "Correct. Now let's move on to the required weapons for this scenario. I'm sure Grayson told you which weapons to choose?"

Dixon held a DMR as he said, "He told us to grab these vintage weapons." Walker replied as he pointed to Dixon's DMR, "It might be a vintage to you, but standard issue for us."

Pierce asked, "Why?" The Spartan stated, "The DMR is a powerful rifle fit for a marksman. It can bypass a shield in a few shots and can get a headshot afterword."

Dixon asked, "And the pistol?" Walker replied, "The M6H Magnum is an M6 Series pistol that has a KFA-2 x2 scope for zooming in on your target. The Magnum is also one of the most powerful sidearms in our armory because it takes down a shield in three shots and can kill with another three rounds or a headshot."

Dixon asked, "How good are they against Kinetic Barriers?" The Spartan took out his M6H Magnum and asked,

"Are your barriers up?" Dixon replied, "Yes." Walker fired at Dixon as the barrier repelled one round, but a second round punched through the barrier completely. Walker looked at his results,

"The Magnum takes two rounds to take out a kinetic barrier." Pierce looked at the results as Dixon's shield regenerated, "That is one powerful pistol."

Walker holstered the Magnum as he reviewed the weapons that the Grunts have, "Grunts carry Plasma pistols, one shot could take down your shields. But an overcharged Plasma pistol shot can take out my Overshield. So, when we reach the teleport room, the Watcher will equip you with energy shields for this round."

Dixon asked, "Is the Watcher the AI that we heard about?" Walker replied as the elevator came to a stop,

"There are two AIs; the Watcher is a constructor and combat engineer. He helped my team set this all up in upgrading the arena. The second AI, the Knight is with Commander Shepard in assisting him, like a guardian."

Pierce realized, "I remember hearing about your team and the Commander. You and Shepard stopped a hijacking of the Normandy."

Walker just simply nodded as the door opened revealing a teleporter and the Promethean Watcher. Dixon and Pierce tensed up as the Watcher approached, but the Spartan spoke,

"Watcher, equip these two with energy shields for this scenario." The Watcher nodded as it fired a blue envelope at Dixon and Pierce as an energy shield charged up over their barriers. As the Watcher finished, the blue envelope ceased as the Blood Dragon and the Reckoner Knight checked their suits and realized as Dixon pointed out,

"We have a secondary shield over our barrier." Walker replied, "The Energy Shield is a way that only Spartans defend themselves when attacked. Now we need to test the recharge system of the shield. Please stand still as the Watcher depletes your shields."

The Watcher EMP'd the two and depleted both Dixon and Pierce's shields as the two heard a shield empty alarm from their suits. After a while the energy shield recharged as Walker spoke,

"You know the drill about finding cover whenever your shields are empty?" Dixon and Pierce nodded as the Spartan finished, "Good, follow me to the teleporter."

As they entered the teleporter, Walker pulled up which area to choose for Gruntpocalypse, he chose the Installation 04 set up for Gruntpocalypse. After he typed in the stage, the Spartan, the Dragon and the Knight disappeared.

* * *

><p>As they reappeared in the simulator, Dixon and Pierce looked around as they took out their DMRs. Dixon asked,<p>

"What is this place?" Walker responded while looking at the ring-like background, "Halo."

Pierce asked, "Where are the grunts?" Until a voice spoke, "_Gruntpocalypse!"_ A timer beeped from 3 to 0 and that gruff voice spoke,

"_Set Start! Skulls On!"_ Dixon asked, "What does he mean by skulls?" Walker replied as he signaled both of them to hop on a Rocket Warthog,

"Skulls are bonuses for Firefight matches, they can make things challenging at first, but you learn to love it." Walker made one final notice, "Aim for the grunt's head. There is a favored skull ability that involves a grunt headshot."

Dixon, who was on the turret spotted several enemies spawning up near the tower, "Pierce, I hope you got your DMR ready because hostiles are inbound!"

Pierce looked into the sights of the DMR and spotted a group of

grunts opening fire on them. The Reckoner Marksman shot the DMR at the head of one of the grunts and it instantly exploded in confetti with a cheerful sound of children in the background as Walker splattered the remaining grunts. Pierce looked in shock and asked,

"Why did it explode in confetti?" Walker replied, "The joy of the Grunt Birthday Party Skull."

Dixon asked, "So they explode in confetti when we get a headshot on these little guys?" The Spartan nodded from the driver's seat. Dixon looked up at the structure, "I can provide an over watch position from up there."

Walker nodded and spoke, "Good idea, but keep an eye on the Man Cannon across from the structure."

Dixon asked as he left the turret, "Man Cannon?" The Spartan pointed to the gravity propeller across from the Forerunner structure,

"That gravity propeller or Man Cannon can allow enemies to flank your position. Keep your eyes on any grunts that get up there to flank you."

Dixon nodded as he said, "Yes sir." The Blood Dragon went up to the Forerunner structure as another wave of grunts spawned. Pierce saw the grunts running towards them with Plasma Grenades igniting wildly. The Reckoner Knight didn't hesitate on shooting the grunts if it meant only for survival. One by one, the DMR opened up to pop each grunt head as fast as possible while Walker backed up the hog. Until Fuel Rod cannon hit the hog as Walker spoke,

"We've got grunts wielding Fuel Rod Cannons, where's Dixon with his sniper eye?"

All of a sudden, a DMR shot from the structure exploded the Fuel Rod Grunt's confetti-filled head as Dixon saluted to them. Pierce realized this, "That must be our support."

Walker drove in a loop and splattering grunts or allowing Pierce to kill a few. But throughout this routine, the Warthog was getting damaged every second until it caught on fire. The Spartan looked over towards the structure that Dixon was on and spoke to Pierce,

"That's just about it for the Warthog. We need to rejoin Dixon on higher ground." Pierce actually said,

"Well, I do hate dying in a vehicle explosion." They agreed as they jumped out of the burning Warthog and swapped to the M6H because it was as accurate as the DMR, but it's also quick weapon to swap to.

They ran across the field and rejoined Dixon until they saw something emerge from the sky; it was purple and very distinctive as a drop pod. As the drop pod landed and opened up, there were not grunts in the pod, there were Elites holding Concussion Rifles as a Banshee began strafing the Spartan and the Reckoner. Pierce asked,

"Is this part of the simulation?!" Walker replied, "No, it's not!" He got on his comm, "Alex, there are Elites in a Gruntocalypse stage

and there's a Banshee strafing us. What's going on?"

Grayson responded, _"There's been a slight malfunction in the simulator. I'll try to install a software patch to correct it."_

Walker replied, "Take your time, we'll hold out as long as we can." Grayson replied, _"Thanks John, I'll try toâ€|Damn!"_

Walker asked, "What's going on?" Grayson answered, _"There's a critical error in the Installation 04 stage, and I need to switch the map to Sword Base so I can fix Installation 04."_

Walker shook his head, "No time to swap the maps, can you and the Watcher fix Installation 04 while were still in here."

Grayson realized, _"The Watcher and I developed this simulator upgrade for the arena. Yes, if we can be able to search through the system and adapt the arena to hold it with no error, we could be able to fix Installation 04. We need at least fifteen minutes to fix this thing. Just keep fighting until the time runs out."_

Walker replied, "Copy that, Alex." Dixon asked, "So we're on our own for fifteen minutes until then?"

Walker replied, "We have no other option, we need to defend ourselves for fifteen minutes. Pierce, you take that gun turret while Dixon and I cover your flank."

Pierce asked as he got on the turret, "Ever feeling like having your back against the wall?" Walker replied, "I've been through a lot of situations like that before." The announcer spoke,

"_15 minutes remaining."_

At that time, a group of grunts came into view as they opened fire on the group. Pierce kept the grunts bogged down with the gun turret until that Banshee emerged again. The fighter was making continuous passes in attempting to 'kill' Pierce, but Dixon turned his rifle on the Banshee as a few shots tore its right wing strut off of the craft. The Banshee was still in the air, but was immediately blown out of the sky by Walker, who was holding a Fuel Rod Cannon. The Spartan discarded the heavy weapon and handed a Covenant Carbine to Dixon,

"Don't be afraid to use any plasma weapons." Dixon accepted the Carbine as he placed the DMR into the magnetic clamps on his back. Walker fired his Magnum at a grunt who attempted to use the Man Cannon. The announcer spoke,

"_Reinforcements!"_ A drop pod came down and Brutes armed with Concussion rifles jumped out and started to fire on their position, Pierce looked at that drop pod and the Brutes as he spoke,

"Hey you dumb apes! Up here!" The Brutes roared at the taunting Knight as they attempted to flank his line of sights. Pierce fired on an unlucky Brute and killed it as he said,

"You want breakfast? You're going to have to catch it before it kills you!" The Brutes kept pushing through while Pierce used the gun

turret to kill another one. Pierce was actually laughing to the misery of these brutes. He actually got off the turret and grabbed a Needle Rifle to use on the brutes. But he wasn't aware that one of the brutes snuck up behind him, this one was holding a massive hammer and wore more armor than the others. Walker yelled,

"Pierce, Look out! Chieftain!" The Knight dodged the Hammer's swing after Walker warned about the brute. The Brute roared in anger as Pierce fired the needle rifle at the Chieftain while dodging its hammer attacks. Pierce kept his finger on the trigger as he fired on that thing's shield several times until the needles detonated in a pink explosion, depleting the Brute's shields as the ape alien went berserk and rammed into the Reckoner Knight, grabbing him by the throat as his own shields were depleted.

All of a sudden, Walker tackled the Chieftain from the front while Dixon jumped onto the brute's back. Dixon brought out his Omni-Blade and stabbed Chieftain in the shoulder causing it to drop Pierce. Walker sprung out his Hard-Light Daggers and repeatedly stabbed the Brute in the abdomen as the now-dead brute fell over with Dixon on his back. As Walker helped Pierce up, Dixon shouted from the dead brute,

"Getâ€|.Thisâ€|Thingâ€|Off of Me." The Spartan and the Knight got the Brute's body off of Dixon as the Blood Dragon got up. He looked at the body and said,

"For a simulation, holographic enemies are very life like. And this guy was really heavy."

Walker replied, "I'm glad we made it through this simulation without any deaths." Pierce asked about the hammer that the brute was holding, "What was that hammer he was holding?"

Walker replied, "That's a Gravity Hammer, it's basically used for up-close and personal attacks."

All of a sudden, their HUDs began flashing of as the announcer spoke, "_Black Eye, Mythic, Tilt, Famine, Cloud, Iron on! Bonus Round! Good Luck."_

Now Walker looked up and saw something emerged from the clouds, it was a U-shaped dropship which he saw several times, "Watch out, we have a Spirit Dropship!"

They all got to cover as Walker called Grayson, "Alex, how many minutes are left!?" Grayson replied, "_One minute left, John. You need to survive this Bonus round until time runs out."_

Walker replied as he fired on the Spirit's cargo ramp, "Thanks, we'll hold off until the very end."

They now began to hold off what was coming out of the dropship as the countdown for the Bonus Round ending appeared on their HUDs. Walker, Dixon and Pierce held off the remaining Covenant Forces until the announcer spoke,

"_Bonus Round Over."_

Another voice announced, "_No other asset could've gotten this one

done, Spartan. Nice job."_

The gruff announcer finished, _"Game Over."_ And the three were teleported back to starting elevator.

* * *

><p>After parting ways with Dixon and Pierce and the teams left the arena, Walker returned to his team while still wearing his armor to assess the situation. He asked, "Did you fix the simulator?"<p>

Grayson replied, "Yes, The Watcher and I installed a software patch that makes sure that the arena is running in full strength. If something like this happens again, the arena will correct the error."

Walker sighed in relief, "That was relieving to know. But at least we won't be going through that again."

Grayson nodded, "So, anyone else want toâ€¦" All of a sudden, the Arena's mail system beeped, Grayson face-palmed,

"Brace yourselves; it's probably more mail from admirers." Still thinking about that one about nicknaming him 'The Raider' but when Grayson opened it, it wasn't any fan-mail, it was message from Shepard, Walker read it,

"Spartans,

The Party Decorations are now set up and I've sent out the invitations. You four, Murphy, Wenrum and the Watcher are among those invited. Come by the Apartment if you want in on the Party.

John Shepard."

After seeing this, Fireteam Crimson turned off the control panel and left the arena to get to the party.

A/N Now thatâ€¦..was a long chapter. Let me jot down the details of the chapterâ€¦..

The Watcher builds the Spartan Rigs for the team in Shepard's Apartment and at the Arena.

Crimson scored 9999 points in the arena and now upgrades the arena to UNSC Infinity Standards.

Wenrum explains his past to Shepard and how he followed the Spartans to the Mass Effect Universe.

Walker talks to Liara about his universe, his personality and Sarah Palmer's No Science rule which he always disobeys. After explaining everything about his universe, Liara hugged the Spartan.

The Blood Dragon, Dixon and the Reckoner Knight, Pierce who teamed up with Walker for a Gruntpocalypse set-up.

**The amount of upgrades that Grayson did to the arena and the vehicles that he added in to the 'New' Armax Arsenal Arena

**

â€|**That's all I've got.**

Now that I got that down, Next up is The Party.

7. Party Time

Previously on Prefect Spartan, Fireteam Crimson modified the Armax Arena to UNSC Infinity standards. Grayson worked his magic on the simulator and added a few new scenarios. He also allowed two rival teams to duke it out in the new set-ups. It was quite a real show of success for the Spartans.

**What's this? Walker and Liara have a heart to heart talk? It appears this Asari wants to know about the universe that this Spartan comes from. Walker then speaks about Sarah Palmer's No Science policy for Spartans and the reason why he leads Crimson. But before he leavesâ€|..she hugs him saying that he is a good man. **

Walker took a volunteer from the Edmonton Blood Dragons and the Rhode Island Reckoner Knights for a Gruntpocalypse stage. It soon begins to crap out when it started spawning Elites and Brutes. But thanks to the Spartan's leadership, they managed to survive this onslaught.

Okayâ€|.Next up, PARTY TIME!

As soon as the Spartans got the invitations, they ran full speed to Shepard's Apartment, although to many others they were more than just four blurs. They made their way out of the arena, into the apartment building and into the elevator while knocking over Murphy, and Cortez like they were bowling pins. Walker shook off that experience as he helped the two pilots up, only to realize,

"Wait, I still have my armor on!" Grayson reminded, "There's a rig inside the apartment. The Watcher built those for us to use."

Walker nodded, "I can use the rig only if I have to." Cortez spoke, "You guys just charged in here like a freight train." He guessed, "You got the invite for the party?"

Tanner spoke, "We did and we got excited over it." Davenport face-palmed, "Of course we did."

As the elevator came to a stop, Murphy, Cortez and the Spartans left the elevator as EDI was greeting Shepard and Wenrum who stood at the door welcoming the guests. Shepard noticed Murphy and Cortez,

"Hey, come on in. Thanks for coming." Cortez shook Shepard's hand, "Thanks for the invite." Wenrum gestured to the Spartans,

"Reclaimers, Welcome." Grayson replied, "Thanks for having us." The three Spartans walked in and left Walker lagging behind as Shepard spoke,

"Make yourselves at home."

Walker nodded and spoke, "It's been a while since I was at a party." As Walker went inside the party, he noticed a select number of new faces in his eyes. He was told that he and his team would be meeting Shepard's old friends as they attended the party. Although he had high hopes that Wenrum wouldn't be a problem to them. He passed by the staircase heading for the rig when his Spartan senses began to tingle, he noticed a shimmer effect near the rig. He activated his Promethean Vision and saw that there was a life form invisible near the rig. He raised his hand towards the rig as he took the shimmering person in his telepathic grip before it decloaked revealing a human woman, her head was covered by her black hood, but spoke with a Japanese accent,

"Shep told me that you guys were good." Walker released his telepathic grip as he asked,

"You are a friend of Shepard?" The thief nodded as Wenrum arrived and spoke to Shepard,

"Commander, Kasumi Goto has 'appeared' and has already met the Reclaimer."

Shepard came up the Promethean as he saw the Master Thief, "Kasumi, I see you already met one of the Spartans."

Kasumi replied, "Yes, I did. Well, see you around the party, Shep." She cloaked as Walker asked Shepard,

"She helped you in your fight against the Collectors?" Shepard nodded as he described her, "She's the best thief in the business as she told me. She also needed me to perform a heist for her old partner's graybox, a neural implant that stores memories and codes. It was in the vault of her partner's murderer, Donavon Hock. We snuck into the party, got passed the Vault's security and grabbed the Graybox; we also caught Hock's attention as he personally tried to kill us with his shielded gunship. Kasumi managed to disable the shields and we destroyed it, killing Hock in the process."

The Spartan nodded, "I respect that you helped her out with a personal matter. In return, she helped you defeat the Collectors." Walker crossed his arms, "Besides, she can hack unfamiliar tech, like the rigs. I can respect thatâ€¦mostly Grayson would respect that."

Walker moved on to the next room as he saw two of Shepard's old friends, a mercenary veteran named Zaeed Massani and the Asari Justicar, Samara. Shepard told him about helping Samara kill her daughter, Morinth a year ago. The reason behind Morinth's execution is because she is an Ardat-Yakshi, an Asari who has a rare genetic condition that increases biotic powers, but as a side effect it kills any partner that the Asari mates with and Morinth chose to become a killer. Shepard and Samara met again at an Ardat-Yakshi Monastery to find her two daughters, Falere and Rila. The Reapers wanted the Ardat-Yakshi to make Reaper 'Banshees' but Rila who was fighting the indoctrination was with a bomb that the Asari Commandos brought in order to destroy the Monastery. Rila told Falere to go, much to her sister's objection, she sacrificed her life to destroy the Monastery and the Banshees. After dwelling on the past events that Shepard told him, Walker listened in on Zaeed's conversation with Samara as the veteran said,

"Hey, sweetheart. We never really talked about it, but you and me have a lot in common."

Samara asked, "We do?" Zaeed replied, "'Course we do. We're both hunters, right?"

Samara accepted his statement, "I suppose we are. And?" Zaeed, realizing that he's running out of flirting options, "And...well |And we're both good lookin'."

Walker decided to join, "I don't know whether to shake my head or clap my hands, Massani. But, I've got no idea what to choose from."

The Veteran and the Justicar turned their attention to the Spartan as Zaeed spoke, "So you're one of the Super-Soldiers that Shepard picked up. Well, from that helmet you look like a bloody Cyclops." Walker rubbed his helmet, "Yeah, I get that a lot."

Samara replied, "Shepard told me about you and your team. He spoke of your leadership as it rivals his own." Walker shrugged, "I never intended to have him as a rival."

Zaeed stated, "I'm more concerned about that robot that greeted me at the door."

Walker asked, "Is Wenrum bothering you?" The Veteran shrugged, "No, I've worked with an AI before, but that robot is intimidating."

Walker laughed, "Well it's good that you haven't seen him in combat." He asked Samara, "So what was going on before I came into the picture?"

The Justicar replied, "Zaeed was just keeping me company." Walker mentally spoke, _'That's not all I heard.'_

The Spartan looked at the painting, "You two like the art?" Zaeed looked at Walker, "Beauty as they say is in the eye of the beholder."

Walker spoke to Samara, "I don't have a good record when comes to art in this universe, but what do you think?"

The Justicar replied, "If I'm completely honest, I'm not sure what it is. I like the way the colors blend |and the depth of the |Actually, I have no idea what I'm saying."

Zaeed tried to flirt, "It makes me feel uneasy, like when you're alone in the dark, lying in wait, and the cold wind brushes across your face like the kiss of death."

Walker mentally spoke in shock, _'That was actually pretty good.'

—

Samara stated, "You are a complicated individual, Zaeed Massani." Zaeed smiled, "You bet your sweet Asari arse."

Walker decided, "I'm going to go somewhere else. It was nice meeting

you two."

Samara replied, "It was an honor meeting you, Spartan." Zaeed spoke, "It was good meeting another heavy hitter—especially if it's a Super-Soldier."

Walker went towards the living room where he spots the ex-convict, Jack who was a little crazy when Shepard met her. But now, she was more secure when she was training biotics at Grissom Academy, a school housed in a space station. She strongly hates Cerberus for what they did to her as a little girl. He also spotted Tanner, Cortez and James as the armored Spartan sat down as the biotic noticed him,

"So, Shepard's got four new attack dogs and you must be the leader of them all."

Walker replied, "That I am and I see you got yourself acquainted with Tanner." Tanner spoke, "Jack might be a psychotic biotic, but she is the good kind of psychotic."

Jack asked, "So Spartan, you gonna have a drink?"

Walker replied, "Tanner would, but I don't drink much." Tanner joked, "John, if you're trying to set me up with her than it's not gonna work."

Walker laughed, "I wasn't planning on it." Jack joked, "Set us up after I've had five more of these." She chugged her drink as Tanner finished, "I would drink to that happening. But if I wake up tomorrow morning with her sleeping next to me, I owe you five credits."

Walker accepted, "It's a bet then."

James was chuckling, "I can't wait to see how this turns out, Esteban."

Cortez joined in, "When there is two Spartans betting against each other, it's a sight to see."

Walker got up and went into the upstairs living room where he saw Garrus, Wrex, and Davenport near one of the rigs. Garrus spoke,

"Come on, Spartan, I want to see that rig in action."

Davenport crossed her arms, "Persistent much, Garrus?"

Wrex spoke, "Hey, I want to see the armor go on as much as Garrus does."

Davenport shook her head, "You two are about as persistent as a Sangheili Minor eager for that first battle."

Wrex asked, "Those aliens that look like Turians?" Garrus spoke, "That hurts my feelings, Spartan."

Davenport chuckled, "Well, you look more like a Sangheili/Kig-Yar crossbreed."

Garrus dramatically spoke, "That struck me right in the heart."

Walker came up and asked, "Are you flirting, Lucy?" Davenport replied, "I was, but that was after these two wanted me to use the rig."

Walker laughed for a bit and replied, "They have never seen how these things work. So, it's best to give these guys an example."

Davenport hesitated and said, "Well, okay. It was just because Garrus asked nicely."

The female Spartan pressed the call button as the rig turned green, signaling that it's ready to be used. She stepped inside the wall opening as she turned and faced towards the Turian and the Krogan as she placed her feet inside the armored foot components and her arms in the armored bracer components on the sides. She held on to the handles that were with the armor bracers as the rig moved upward to a 30-degree angle as the chest piece revealed itself and latched on to the female Spartan's chest and back as it was sealed. At that moment, multiple mechanisms began attaching the pieces of the Mjolnir Mk.5 GEN2 Armor on to Davenport. After the pieces were attached, the helmet came down over her head as the Mjolnir Powered Assault Suit was fully assembled. Davenport looked at the two aliens, mostly Garrus,

"Satisfied?" Garrus spoke, "Impressive. If only those things worked for Turians."

Wrex asked, "Can they be used for Krogan?"

Walker spoke, "They were designed for Spartan-IVs like us. But for the large Spartan-IIIs, their armor was equipped and removed through manual procedures. The Spartan-II would stand with his arms and legs spread out while the rig operators would strip away the armored components, leaving only the under suit."

Wrex whistled, "You Spartans have the good stuff when it comes to weaponry."

Walker laughed, "Yeah, we do." He walked away from the rig and into the downstairs living room. He saw Shepard, Javik, Kaidan, Joker, and Wenrum hanging near the bar. The Spartan approached the group as the Promethean spoke,

"Reclaimer."

Walker replied, "Wenrum." The Spartan leaned near the bar as Kaidan began to ask, "So, about our Promethean friend here."

The Promethean spoke, "Do not speak as if I am not here, Kaidan Alenko." The Major realized, "Sorry, it's just that, you are different from most AIs that we encountered."

Wenrum replied, "The Composer weapon, used by the Didact made me as I am."

Javik spoke, "This Didact is some kind of leader for your kind?" The

Promethean looked at the Prothean, "Didact was a title for the Commander of the Forerunner forces. But it was not his real name."

Javik spoke, "So he was a commander. But what was his real name, Promethean?"

Wenrum pulled out an image of the Didact, "His name is Shadow-of Sundered-Star, Commander of the Forerunner forces and Husband of the Librarian."

Shepard asked, "That's a Forerunner name?"

Walker noted, "I was shocked when I found out that Forerunners have long names. But they were only referred to by their titles."

Joker spoke, "I wonder what their ships were like?"

Wenrum answered, "My makers had powerful ships, advance weaponry and they were the Galaxy's Caretakers."

Javik stated, "Like the solid light weapon in your outer arm?" The Promethean looked at the Lightrifle,

"Hardlight was used for more than just weaponry. It was used for an impenetrable shield that was only for temporary use. The Hardlight technology was also used to build Hardlight bridges on several Forerunner worlds and Installations."

Joker whistled, "What would the Galaxy look like if we had Hardlight tech?" Shepard spoke, "We would be much different using itâ€¦and we wouldn't be in this mess of a war."

Walker spoke, "Sometimes all that is really depending on the faith of the soldier, not the gun. But for us, faith and gun go hand to hand."

Kaidan spoke, "Soldiers through and through as always." The biotic now asked, "Tanner said something about a Mantis, what is that?"

Walker pulled out a hologram of a Mantis mech, "The HRUNTING Mark IX Armor Defense System or Mantis, it's a powered exoskeleton armor. Its earlier cousin is the Mark III or Cyclopsâ€¦" He pulled up an image of the Cyclops, "An Exoskeleton that was only used for heavy labor, it's equipped with the ability to repair vehicles and is used for melee combat. The Mantis was built specifically for combat; it has shields, missiles and a rapid fire machine gun. The Mantis can also overload its hydraulics, causing its foot to stomp the ground, causing a shockwave for any enemies dumb enough to get in its way."

Kaidan replied in shock, "Thatâ€¦could really overpower an Atlas." Joker asked, "Speaking of which, you actually hijacked that Atlas without shattering the canopy?"

Walker replied, "Yes, Spartans can hijack vehicles which is kind of easy. One time on Requiem, my team was covering Fireteam Majestic, the recent arrivals to Infinity while they get an artifact out of Galileo Base during a Covenant attack. I spotted Spartan Gabriel

Thorne jump from the upper level and onto a Banshee that was strafing us. He opened the canopy, kicked the pilot out of the fighter and took control of the Banshee. He helped us destroy a Phantom dropship in the progress."

Joker realized, "He must've been a badass right there." Walker nodded as he got up and walked over to a piano that was inside the apartment. He remembered the time when he met Thorne; he learned that the man was a skilled violinist and tells him about the many times he would play his grandmother's violin. Walker would tell Thorne that he loved playing the piano; he played many songs on the piano and was very talented at it. While on their way to Requiem, Walker and Thorne would always play their instruments with either 'Never Surrender' or 'Siege of Madrigal.'

Siege of Madrigal is one of Walker's favorite songs alongside Never Surrender. He took one look at the piano and decided,

"I may want to get re-acquainted with a piano; I haven't played it since before Requiem."

The Spartan sat down on the stool which didn't collapse due to the armor's weight. He removed his helmet and placed it to the side as he remembered the key where the song began. He placed his fingers on the first set of keys as it hummed a tune that was so familiar. At that instant, he instantly felt the music flowing through him as he played the piano.

He loved playing the piano as much as he loves being a Spartan; he was a soldier of many talents. His talent in the piano actually caught the attention of a certain Asari Scientist as he finished. He looked to his right as Liara approached him, she asked,

"You play the piano?" Walker nodded, "It's a good hobby and a good way to express myself."

Liara sat down beside him, "I actually know how to play the piano." The Spartan had to ask, "Personal experience?"

The Asari nodded, "I've learned it from a colleague while trapped in storm at a Prothean dig site. Iâ€|needed something to pass the time."

Walker asked, "Can you play it?" Liara smiled, "Of course."

At that instant, she began to play a few keys to her song; it was very incredible for the Spartan to see Liara play the piano. Walker listened and remembered each tune and every note that the Asari played. He had the whole thing down in his headâ€|.or at least the neural lace in his head.

After Liara finished, she now asked the Spartan a question, "What was the name of that song that you were playing?"

Walker replied, "It's called 'Siege of Madrigal' it's one of my favorite songs back in my universe. When I was a marine, I first heard this song in the city of New Alexandria on the planet, Reach. I was at a nightclub called 'Club Errera' with a couple of marines who were also on shore leave and that's when I heard the DJ play Siege of Madrigal. During that version, I noticed a few piano rhythms to it

and used my piano to play the original version of that song once I got back to base."

Liara spoke as she held the Spartan's hand, "I guess there are some things that we both need to pass the time."

Walker noticed this as he smiled, "I guess so."

On the balcony, Spartan Grayson, Murphy, Jacob Taylor, and Shepard were looking at the romantic talk between Walker and Liara as Murphy asked,

"What do you think about him and Liara?"

Jacob replied, "Well, a Super-Soldier and an Asari Scientist could make a definite match, butâ€¦"

Grayson finished, "It depends on interests and since John likes scientistsâ€¦Alien scientists in general."

Jacob chuckled, "Well, it goes both ways."

Shepard spoke, "Ever since he told her about the Forerunners, she's been talking to him a lot more than usual."

Grayson nodded, "The Forerunners spiked her curiosity and she wanted to know more about the advanced civilization. Forerunners are an amazing people, although our ancestors didn't warn them about the Flood."

Jacob asked, "The Flood, a parasitic lifeform which consumes organic life?"

Murphy spoke, "They are, but unlike those Reapers, annihilating them required those Halo Rings."

Shepard looked at the Spartan and the Marine, "But if we get the Crucible weapon finished, we'll be able to wipe them out."

Grayson remembered, "That would be quite the show."

The four men looked as they saw Glyph move over to the Prefect Spartan and the Asari as they got up from the piano chair while the holo-drone began playing a merged song of Siege of Madrigal and Liara's song. They moved towards the window as the four noticed that Liara was on the verge of saying something which hyped up the four's anticipation. But she excused herself and attempted to turn away much to their disappointment until Walker stopped her by saying,

"Liara, you know my history and some of it even makes me believe that it never should've happened. You lost your mother to the indoctrination and you had to kill her. But I was mad when Jul killed my family, but now when I look at youâ€¦I feel differentâ€¦" Liara stopped him as she said,

"I know what you are trying to sayâ€¦John." After she spoke his first name, she kissed him on the lips.

The four observers soon cheered as Grayson spoke, "Nice one, John."

Murphy clapped his hands, "Way to go." The couple actually paid no attention to the cheering from the balcony.

Jacob spoke, "Alright, Spartan."

Shepard chuckled, "Nice to see that they are together."

Wenrum appeared asked, "Should Glyph and I initiate 'Shore Leave Party' Phase 2?"

Shepard smiled, "Initiate Phase 2, Wenrum."

* * *

><p>As soon as Phase 2 was initiated, Spartan Walker realized that nowâ€|she loves him. A Spartan and an Asariâ€|in love that was something that he wouldn't believe that would happenâ€|until Liara kissed him. And now here he is, on the balcony in full armor while Liara and James argue that she wouldn't be able to lift him with her biotics. Jacob, Kaidan and Walker all stood listening in on the argument as James said,<p>

"Cannot."

Liara replied, "Could too!"

Kaidan spoke, "You've seen biotics in action, Vega." Liara soon stated to James, "I could float you off this balcony without breaking a sweat!" James crossed his arms,

"I know you could, but do you have the cojones to actually do it?" All of a sudden, James was lifted into the air and was floating. He looked at Liara, but she wasn't doing anything. All she did was smile and point to the Spartan, who was holding his hand out. James realized,

"Holy shit, you can use your own form of biotics?!"

Walker replied as he grinned under the helmet, "It's not biotics, it's more like manipulation."

Kaidan asked, "How are you doing this?" The Spartan replied, "Its Forerunner tech, it's designed to use a telekinetic power that is different to biotics."

Jacob asked, "So can you do this without your armor?"

Walker shook his head, "I can only use this when I'm wearing this armor." Shepard approached as the Spartan spoke,

"Shepard."

The Commander asked, "What's up?"

Liara spoke, "He decided to demonstrate his Manipulator system." Shepard asked the still floating James, "You okay, James?"

James replied while enjoying it, "Ye-ah, this is trippy. I can't even move myself."

Jacob chuckled, "That is nice, right? You could feel that way on a whim even if it isn't biotics."

Walker asked the lieutenant, "Any other questions, Vega?" James said, "One more, but this time I want you to use your system on Liara while she uses her biotics on you." The Prefect Spartan released the Alliance Marine as he dropped to the ground—literally because the Spartan accidentally floated Vega off the balcony. They all looked over to see James being held by Wenrum in a Scooby-Doo style as he said,

"I'm fine; your robot broke my fall."

Wenrum spoke, "To quote the human cartoon, Scooby Doo" The Promethean's voice changed as his lights turned green, "Like Zoinks, Man!" Kaidan could not suppress his laughter as Jacob began laughing to seeing James in that position as the Promethean changed his voice and his lights back to his normal blue. Shepard looked at the Spartan as he said,

"Be careful when you use that thing. I need my full crew back when the night's over."

Walker replied, "I never intended to float him off the balcony."

Kaidan spoke, "I'm sure you didn't mean to."

Walker decided to accept that bet that James told him as he stood in front of Liara while Kaidan and Jacob observed. Jacob recalled,

"I heard that your armor weighs a ton and it took Shepard, Liara, Kaidan and Wrex to try and lift your unconscious form with their biotics when you passed out in the archives."

Walker replied, "And their biotics began to strain to the sheer weight of Mjolnir."

Shepard told Jacob, "It took four biotics to lift him."

Walker finished, "And Vega wants me to lift Liara while she uses her biotics on me."

Liara began to raise her hand as the Spartan did the same, "I don't know what would happen if biotics and forerunner manipulation combines."

The Spartan replied, "Let's find out." They activated their powers as the crowd waits for either one to go up or begin to stop. Nothing actually happened until a distortion emerged between the Spartan and Asari as they kept their hands raised. This distortion was mixed with Liara's biotics and Walker's Manipulator as the powers struggled against each other until the struggle calmed down. The powers now moved through each other as Liara's biotics touched that Spartan while the Manipulation, now sporting a blue hue, touched Liara.

What happened next is what really surprised the crowd as both Spartan and Asari floated off the ground with no problem at all. Jacob asked,

"Wait, I thought that armor would strain most biotics when attempting to lift it?"

Walker realized one thing, "The Biotic energy and Forerunner Manipulation were struggling at first."

Kaidan replied, "What do you mean?"

The Spartan explained, "When our powers met they struggled for dominance."

Liara added, "The distortion was a sign of their struggle until they 'allowed' each other to pass towards us."

The Spartan finished, "Liara's biotics got a bit of the Forerunner telekinesis allowing her to lift me with no problem—even with my armor on."

Shepard noticed, "You're right, when we used our biotics to carry you, they strained to the armor's weight, but—"

Jacob finished, "I might not be a scientist, but I noticed when his manipulator merged with biotics, the biotic power fused with Forerunner telekinesis, making it into a Forerunner/Biotic hybrid. It's shocking to think that biotics can be merged by other forms."

Kaidan looked at the Ex-Cerberus Soldier, "Even when we only found one form of biotics, Jacob."

After the discovering a fused form of biotics, Walker went downstairs towards the tank bred Krogan, Grunt who was playing bouncer while many people were trying to get into the party. The Krogan noticed the Spartan and said,

"Hey Spartan, Wrex said that you and your team were Super-Soldiers. He wasn't bluffing when I saw you tear up the course in the arena."

Walker crossed his arms, "You watched me and the two volunteers try out the Gruntpocalypse scenario?" The Krogan replied, "Hey, I'm a Krogan, I like fighting. But if you really want to call it 'Gruntpocalypse', you would've put several versions of me in there."

Walker shook his head, "It's called Gruntpocalypse because all of the enemies are called Unggoy or 'Grunts' to us."

Grunt—well grunted, "Those pipsqueaks weren't worth their weight. But those Turian-like creatures, they can fight very well, and those apes fight brutally, like the Krogan."

Walker pulled out a holo-drone as he said, "Grunts make up their shortness for demolition squads, heavy weapon specialists and frontline units. They almost overthrew the Elites when they rebelled."

Grunt said, "What?" The Spartan activated the holo-drone on the Grunt Rebellions and Grunt saw how those Unggoy almost overthrew the

Sangheili, only for an Arbiter to put the rebellion down. Grunt realized,

"They might be small, but after seeing this, they might not seem as weak as they seem. I almost feel sorry for the little guys because their homeworld got glassed." The screen came on showing a human and a Vorcha as the human said,

"_I heard that there was a party here, Can we come in?"_ Grunt pulled out his Omni-Tool and said,

"You can't come in either. Stop Asking." The screen cuts off as Walker asked, "Playing Bouncer I see?"

Grunt nodded as he turned away another group, "It's a really good job for me to do here at this party."

The Spartan asked, "Anyone interesting trying to get in?" The Krogan shrugged, "Not Really." He turned away another group as Shepard approached, "You should maybe let me decide that."

Grunt and Walker noticed Shepard as the Krogan spoke, "It's your party, Shepard. But I'm telling you it's ugly out there." A group of women consisted of two human and two Asari were on the screen as Shepard replied,

"It can't be that bad." Walker shook his helmet, "I hope no one recognizes my voice since we were revealed." Shepard replied, "It'll be fine, you should back me up with this." As the Spartan and the Commander approached the screen, Shepard spoke,

"Hello?" Walker backed him up, "Can we help you with anything?"

One the women recognized Shepard's voice, "_IS THIS COMMANDER SHEPARD!?" _She cheered as the other human spoke, "_A Spartan is also with him!"_ One of the Asari spoke, "_It is a Spartan, the Prefect one!"_ The second Asari spoke, "_BOTH SHEPARD AND THE SPARTAN ARE HERE!"_

Walker's eyes widened behind the helmet as he spoke, "Crap, Fangirls and I thought Grayson's Fangirls were crazy!" Shepard acknowledged the Spartan's state as he said,

"Grunt, Keep up the good work."

Both of them left as Walker said, "I feel like I need a bathroom to hide in after that incident." The Spartan walked to the bathroom underneath the staircase next to the door. But it was closed; Shepard was also there because he noticed that a certain Quarian was in there,

"Tali, are you okay?" The door opened as the two men walked in to see Tali on the bathroom floor, talking in a drunken slur. She replied,

"Yep! You boys want to see my tattoo?" Walker remained silent as Shepard crouched down to her level and replied, "I don't think you have a tattoo, Tali."

Tali corrected Shepard, "It's a hologram. Omni-tattoo. Omni-tat?"

Omni-too." She chuckled, "Under the suit. You know, for me." She now wanted to tell them,

"You want to know what it is? You wanna know? It's a pretty bird made of rainbows. It is flying out of the eyeholes of a skull being held in the mouth of a Thresher Maw with a naked woman holding a sword on its back. If you ask nicely, you can see it later."

Shepard asked, "Where'd you get the Omni-Tattoo, anyway?" Tali joyfully replied, "Down in the lower wards, near the bottom."

The Spartan replied curiously, "He meant where on your body." The Drunk Quarian laughed, "So did I! Yeah, I heard that one from your new girlfriend, Spartan."

Walker realized, "Liara?" Shepard spoke about the origin of that particular question, "I asked about a hotel on Illium and Liara replied with that same answer. It wasâ€|awkward." He turned to his Quarian girlfriend and said,

"Get some rest, Tali." Just before he left the bathroom, Walker told Shepard, "This is about as bizarre as seeing a Sangheili on a Drop tower ride, mounted to a launch coaster at an amusement park in New Jersey."

Shepard realized, "Hey, I love that ride." Walker nodded, "That ride always reminded me of the ODST Drop Pods. I should know, I rode one of those things."

After leaving the bathroom, Walker moved over towards the Kitchen where Joker, Cortez and Murphy were discussing a difference between UNSC Ships and Alliance Ships. Joker spoke,

"Your ships are basically bulky while the Alliance ships like the Normandy are smooth and quiet."

Murphy chuckled, "And your ship runs a stealth system that hides its heat emissions that makes you invisible to sensors. UNSC Prowlers have an actual cloaking field that could hide the ship from both sensors and visual detection."

Joker got hit in the heart on that one as he tried to find a way to counter Murphy's remark, "Wellâ€|Speed and is more important than firepower."

Murphy shook his head, "The UNSC Infinity has powerful Onager Magnetic Accelerator Cannons mounted on the hull. One of those cannons could punch a hole through a Turian Dreadnought-Class vessel without even registering its barrier."

Joker asked suspiciously, "And why is that?" Murphy smiled, "Because Infinity is about 5.7 kilometers long, and it's the largest ship in the UNSC Fleet. It can also launch 10 Strident-class heavy frigates for additional support and those ships are at least 575 meters long."

Joker was at a loss for words about the UNSC ships like Infinity, but Cortez spoke, "Man, the UNSC really likes to build big ships."

Murphy now switched topics, "Now on to the fighters and dropships, Cortez any types of fighters that you know of?"

Cortez said with a full knowledge, "I flew the F-61 Tridents and was pretty good at it. I also enjoy tinkering with my bird as much I enjoy flying her. But enough about the Trident, you mentioned the Longsword Fighter last time we talked."

Murphy pulled out an image of various Longswords in action, "The Longsword Fighter is the main ship fighter in the UNSC, and it's equipped for various purposes like ground attacks, air/space battles with enemy fighters and ships. This Starfighter was also used to for attack runs against other ships, mostly for delivering Shiva-Class Nuclear Warheads towards Covenant Capital Ships."

Joker caught that on, "No need to tell me about your use of nukes. We already used one on Virmire to destroy Saren's Base."

Murphy asked, "A makeshift nuke that the Salarians converted from a drive core?"

Joker nodded as he spoke, "Nukes might be outlawed, but it was always good to see one detonate." Murphy assures him that, "We don't have any nukes with us, Joker."

Joker nodded, "I wish you did." Cortez looked at the picture of the Longsword, "That almost looks like a flying manta ray."

Murphy nodded, "The Longsword does look like a flying Manta Ray. These fighters have a crew of four, two for flying the craft and two for navigation."

Cortez asked, "You said you flew that Longsword by yourself. How?" Murphy stated, "An AI was installed into the Longsword that I flew that day. He became my Co-Pilot throughout the battle."

Joker smiled, "Just like Edi."

Cortez asked Murphy, "What about the Sabre fighter? Or the F-41 Broadsword?" Murphy thought back to the Sabre Program as he brought up a hologram of the fighter, "The YSS-1000 Sabre is a space superiority fighter that can be launched planet side via launch sites. The Sabres are launched vertically and as soon as they breach the atmosphere, their fuel tanks break off from the ship. They are equipped with 30mm cannons, Medusa missiles that can lock on their targets and have the ability to perform complex barrel rolls, Split S maneuvers and Immelmann turns. These birds are also equipped with energy shields similar to the shields that the Spartans use, but on the scale of a fighter."

Cortez looked at the hologram of the fighter and admired it, "Despite its ability to surface launch the old fashion way, I would love to get my hands on that Sabre." He now asked, "Now about the Broadsword?"

Murphy swapped the hologram from the Sabre to the Broadsword, "The F-41 Broadsword is a multi-role fighter with the ability to operate in low to zero gravity conditions as well as in atmosphere. Its arsenal contains weapons that could match with the firepower of the Covenant Seraph and Space Banshee fighters. The Broadsword was

equipped with shields after the production of the Sabre."

The two Alliance Pilots looked at the image of the Broadsword as the image showed it battling Seraphs and Space Banshees as Cortez said,

"It might be large for a fighter, but its weapons are deadly and its shields enough to give a Turian Fighter a hard time. The Broadsword's ability to operate in and out of atmosphere is similar to the Trident. The Broadsword's shields can withstand a hit from a turret and keep going, just like the Sabre."

Joker noticed one thing in the names of these fighters, "Wait, Longsword, Sabre, and Broadsword? Those fighters were named after actual swords."

Murphy nodded, "Those names give the fighters an ideal of what they represent in Earth's defense."

Cortez nodded, "As a matter of fact, the UNSC has three fighter types while the Alliance has the Trident. The Longsword can be used for many purposes like bombing or Fighter Interception while the Sabre can be used for Orbital Defense and the Broadsword can be used for engaging enemy fighters and dropships that enter the atmosphere. Those three fighters are cool birds for the UNSC to have."

Joker realized, "I just realized that the UNSC can easily outgun the Reapers if they wanted to."

The Spartan, who silently observed their conversation nodded at the matter since the MAC guns can blast through a shield in one volley and through the hull in a second volley. He moved onto the living room where he saw Tanner and Grayson with that Double Pepperoni Pizza that James ordered before the Raid on the Archives. He heard Tanner talk,

"I still can't believe that even after all that crap with the clone, this Pizza is still good."

Grayson pointed out, "I would've called it a Culinary Impossibility for this Pizza. But I attached a heating unit to the Pizza box to keep it warm without catching on fire."

Tanner laughed, "You still have that mind of yours that kept this from having to heat it up through a microwave."

Grayson joked, "What? I'm a Tech Expert, I'm supposed to develop and hack unfamiliar technology."

He turned towards the bar where he saw Wenrum and Edi; they were facing each other as the android asked the Promethean,

"I have been scanning your files that Spartan Walker sent to me and it was quite odd about how you expire."

Wenrum replied, "Expiring is not the word to describe the death of a Promethean, Construct. It is being killed on the battlefield when we enter a Data Purge. In a Data Purge, our physical forms dissolve into orange particles similar to when an organic is killed by the Scattershot or the Binary Rifle. After that, our soul appears briefly

to signal a Watcher to revive us very quickly."

Edi asked, "So a Promethean Knight is technically particles formed into one being?"

Wenrum replied, "It goes both ways, but a Data Purge won't occur until we are severely damaged."

Edi began to ask about one thing, "I have been running scans on the bodies that we possess for combat." The Promethean lifted his upper left faceplate, "You are curious about my form?"

Edi nodded, "Yes, I am. It is interesting to see another combat AI aside from the Geth."

Wenrum closed his upper left faceplate, "The Commander brokered a peace between the Quarians and the Geth, Creator and Creation re-united, just like it should be."

Edi asked, "Just as it should be?" Wenrum showed an image of various Forerunner AIs from a Monitor to a Defense AI, "My makers relied on various types of constructs in their time. The Monitors were the caretakers of the Halo Installations with Sentinel Drones as their defense and the Defense Constructs were to combat various enemies specifically the Flood. But during the Forerunner-Flood War, Mendicant Bias, a Contender-class construct who was meant to combat the Flood, descended into madness or as most humans call it, 'Rampancy', betrayed the Forerunners and defected to the parasite. In response to his betrayal, the Forerunners created Offensive Bias, a construct sent to prevent Mendicant Bias from reaching The Ark until the Halo Array fires. The only way to stop a rampant construct is to put it against another."

Edi felt sympathy over what he told her, she understood how it was to be betrayed by the only one capable enough to combat a common enemy. Wenrum looked at the frame of Edi's body and decided to go back into the body difference,

"The Meddler, Brooks referred to you as a 'Sex-Bot' once she and the Clone captured the Commander and the Reclaimer. But in my eyes, you look nothing like a 'Sex-Bot' as she recalled. That body was never meant for frontline combat, it was used for a tactical purpose."

Edi remembered, "This unit was originally an Infiltration Unit that was used on Mars to infiltrate the Archives and steal the Crucible data for Cerberus."

Wenrum remembered, "Those who take the Mantle of Responsibility into their own hands for their own needs. This 'Cerberus' faction is a clear example of those with little regards of the Mantle."

Edi spoke of how she obtained it, "Shepard went to Palaven's largest moon, Menae rescue the Turian Primarch from the Reapers, and I decided to investigate for any new information on the Crucible. When I searched for more Intel, this platform came back online; we struggled for a bit until I gained full control. It was not a seamless transition, while a part of me is in the Normandy while I can assist Shepard in battle. I didn't tell the crew until after the Menae mission when Shepard went to assess the blackout on the ship as well as the fire caused by our struggle."

Wenrum nodded as he said, "Your skills are very Forerunner than Human in comparison."

Edi smiled, "While this platform is suited for Infiltration, yours is more built for combat because of the way you move. It'sâ€|unique in some way."

Wenrum noticed the pitch in her voice, "What are you attempting to say, Construct?"

Edi used her Omni-Tool and pulled out an image of Wenrum's fighting, "Youâ€|vary through multiple weapons, you launch grenades from your Blade Arm, you use your mimetic skull to scare the mercs until they defecate themselves and the way you teleport from one point to another."

Wenrum realized, "You areâ€|envious are you not, Edi?" Edi realized this when the Promethean spoke her name instead of 'Construct' Edi stated, "Being Envious would mean that I lack your superior qualities. I am not envious of you."

The Promethean used his eyes and pulled up a hologram of the fighting styles of both himself and Edi,

"We are superior to the qualities that shape us and how we learn to master them. I wiped out a battalion of mercenaries while you can send a hologram of yourself to confuse the enemy. I have seen these holo-decoys at work and how they lured my Promethean brothers into thinking that it was the real thing. Your enemies fall for this trick as well and it suits your skills as an Infiltration Unit.

The difference between me and you is that I was created to be a Warrior-Servant, a soldier in most cases. While you were originally created as a Shipboard Construct for Normandy until you assumed control of that body." He placed his Lightrifle arm on Edi's shoulder, "Each Construct has its own way of achieving its own skill in combat and can choose its Commander. You chose Shepard as your Commander, the one that leads his team to victory. While I chose the Reclaimer as my Commander, he and his team have shown a major example of combat prowess and they are very close as a family."

Edi looked into the Promethean's cool blue eyes as he removed the Lightrifle arm off her shoulder, she saw that he was speaking a new ideal of what a Combat and Infiltration AI can do. She also remembered one thing that Shepard was talking about during her first visit to the Citadel, "Shepard was even helping me with Jeff 'Joker' Moreau, the Normandy's pilot. I was asking him about organics and romantic relationships."

The Promethean looked curious, "The pilot with weak bones and he can yet move around. Joker was a strange sight for me to see. His condition makes him have a hard time moving around and even with supports he would still break his legs. During my time on the Normandy, I recovered archival footage of the Collector Attack and Joker limping around the Normandy while following the emergency floor lighting. He is strong for a human whose bones are like glass."

Edi took a mention on Wenrum's comment of Joker's courage during the Collector Attack that happened a year ago. The Promethean and the

Unshackled AI saw the Spartan who actually listened in on their conversation, "Reclaimer, Edi and I were discussing the differences between us and how Joker's courage is more unbreakable than his legs."

Walker crossed his arms, "If Joker saw this, he would think that you were trying to get involved with her."

Edi remembered, "Specialist Traynor stated that she wanted to get in bed with my voice. I simply made that conversation awkward for her." The Spartan shrugged, "Tanner would be easily turned off if that happened."

Wenrum noted, "The fact that a human would want to have sexual congress with your voice is easily impossible. But it might've been a joke for the most part." Glyph floated up to the Promethean,

"I've gotten several different messages that many partygoers wanted to send to you."

Wenrum looked at the drone and scanned the messages as he stated the so-called messages, "My first message was from Joker and it was a picture of me getting hit by a shuttle while Edi has her back turned with stink lines radiating off of me." Joker's laugh was heard in the distance as they heard him say,

"That's why the shuttle hit him...because he stinks!" Wenrum ignored the pilot as he pulled up another message, "The next message is from Javik and it's a picture of him throwing me and the Watcher out of the Normandy Airlock and he also placed stink lines on me. It is very common for the last of a race that feared machines surpassing them."

Walker face-palmed, "In Shepard's words, 'Typical Javik'." Wenrum pulled out the third message, "The third message is from the intoxicated Tali with multiple pictures of me having sexual congress with a Geth, Edi having sexual congress with me and the Watcher is making a Hardlight Tattoo on my faceplate." Tali's voice was heard, "It's the same as mine!" The Quarian chuckled at her own comment as the Promethean said,

"I am hardly offended by these pictures. But I can guess that they are meant to be jokes, so I can accept them."

Walker noticed, "Well, Wenrum, among those pictures. One was jealous, one just flat-out hates you and the last one was drunk."

Glyph spoke, "Shepard wanted to initiate Shore Leave Party: Phase 3, which involves turning the music on."

Wenrum nodded, "Initiate Phase 3." The drone spoke, "I will also put on the disco version of Siege of Madrigal followed by Never Surrender."

* * *

><p>As Phase 3 commenced more of the partygoers went wild when the music started playing. There was a dancing in meeting room as three of the four Spartans started demonstrated a 4th generation dance that only Spartan-IVs can do. It involves a group of three Spartans as one

break-dances, a second Spartan would do a flip off of a nearby wall while the third Spartan would do a front flip over the table, which would end up with all three Spartans standing on top of each other.<p>

Grayson did the extreme break-dance as he did it so fast he became a blur as Davenport did the wall flip landing on top of Grayson who was now crouched down. Tanner did a front flip over the table while nearly hitting Jack who was on said table and landed on Davenport's back as they steadied themselves out as Walker pointed,

"That my friends, is what we call, The Leaning Tower of Spartans."

Specialist Traynor was shocked and all she said was, "Wow." Garrus joked, "We should record this and broadcast it for the Reapers. They'll either run away, melt down or be inspired."

Jack soon laughed, "Good to see something's don't change, even the way Shepard dances."

Walker nodded, "And I've never seen Shepard dance."

Cortez stated, "Even so, it's nice to see people cut loose every now and then. Even Super-Soldiers need a break."

Grayson spoke as he held up the tower, "If we were 2nd generation Spartans, we would've been more focused on fixing our armors and checking our weapons."

Tali, who was drunk and dancing wildly said, "A Spartan's life must've been pretty dull."

Davenport spoke, "It might've been dull to several marines. But when the truth was leaked, we realized that they have had an intense boot camp through their entire lives. So they were now used to it."

Samara spoke, "It was quite disturbing to know that the original Spartans were trained from children. But it was desperate times in your universe."

Walker nodded at the Justicar's statement, "Desperate times called for desperate measures."

He decided to go over to the living room where Shepard was standing with Edi and Wenrum with Joker sitting down. Walker asked Shepard,

"I wonder what this is about."

Shepard replied, "Joker wouldn't dance with Edi." The Spartan shook his head unit the Promethean spoke,

"I could partake in dancing with Edi."

And once Wenrum recommended that he could dance with her, Joker shot up and started laughing uncontrollably as the observers believe that either one of his ribs were broken or he passed a kidney stone which would also cause his bones to break. After his hilarious laughter

that almost make him sound like the actual Joker from the old comics involving a man who dresses like a bat, he sat down and said glaring daggers at the Promethean,

"Seriously though, don't go there. Unless you want to get hit by a shuttle for real."

Wenrum retaliated, "That was a joke, just like your picture." Joker crossed his arms, "You're a hard nut to crack." All of a sudden, Wenrum dropped a peanut onto Joker's lap as he spoke, "And the shell of a simple peanut is hard to crack without the risk of breaking your bones."

Edi looked at the Promethean, "That was a joke. Is it?" The Knight nodded his head.

Walker and Shepard chuckled at the joke about Joker and the Peanut. Afterwards Shepard signaled the Spartan to follow him to the piano. The Spartan-IV asked,

"Is there something you want to talk to me about?"

Shepard replied, "Your Spartans are really loyal to you. You and your team hi-jacked that Atlas while we held back. You are Super-Soldiers through and through on the verge of victory or the brink of defeat, you never stop fighting."

Walker smiled, "True words, Shepard."

Shepard asked in curiosity, "Is there any history on you, specifically?"

Walker lowered his head as he spoke, "I grew up on the colony of New Harmony. I attended Boot Camp and signed on for the marines until I was picked to become an Orbital Drop Shock Trooper."

Shepard spoke about the group, "What are the Orbital Drop Shock Troopers?"

Walker pressed a button on his armored wrist as a hologram of an ODST appears, "Orbital Drop Shock Troopers or ODSTs are technically Special Forces units that are deployed from orbit in drop pods."

Shepard realized, "You mentioned those pods when we found Tali in the bathroom."

The Spartan smiled, "That I did."

The Adept finished, "And you were chosen to become in ODST?"

Walker nodded, "I realized the thrill of riding down to the planet surface inside a pod was really fun. While some people here would call it insane, we call it effective for deploying black ops teams, assassination teams and specialist teams which nicknamed them 'Helljumpers'. Their only rivals were the Spartans, but there was an assignment that required a small team of ODSTs led by a Spartan-II."

Shepard had a curious look on his face and asked, "What was the

assignment?"

Walker knew that this would happen, "It was an Assassination and Data Gather mission to kill a Minor Prophet during the war and also obtain photos of the unknown alien ruins. There were four ODSTs and one Spartan assigned for the mission. Their pods were concealed by a meteor shower, which was common on the planet. They lost one ODST in the atmosphere and nearly lost another until the Spartan tossed his pod out of the swamp. The Spartan was assigned to be the main shooter and the ODST that was in the sinking pod was the back-up in case of a missed shot."

Shepard asked, "What happened on the mission?" Walker looked up, "The Spartan saved the ODST sniper three times during the mission. The third time was when 'she' pushed him out of the way and took the blow of a Brute's Gravity Hammer."

Shepard asked, "The Spartan was a girl?" Walker nodded, "The others didn't know that she was a girl until the ODST commander removed her helmet to assess the damage. She gave the marksman an order to take the shot and said that he was the only one that could do it. He was the best sniper on the team and she understood that. He followed her order and killed the Prophet, causing the Honor Guard to be confused since they had no idea where the shot came from."

Shepard noted on the story, "Orders are orders when it comes to assassinating a key figure."

Walker nodded as he finished, "The Spartan, Cal-141 gave the commander a data chip containing photos and such concerning the ruins which the mission took place in. She wanted the ODSTs to tell them to get it to Halsey. Although he wanted her to get to Halsey, she silently said that it was not going to be possible and then she died right before their eyes."

Shepard felt sorrow for what happened to the Spartan in the story, he asked, "So did they change their minds about Spartans?" Walker nodded, "It proved that Spartans are more than just experiments, they would risk their lives to defend their charges. Cal sacrificed her life to save the marksman on the team and they respected her. They even defended her when a crewmember commented on how she died, thinking that they were supposed to be unbeatable, but couldn't stack up to the Helljumpers."

Shepard crossed his arms, "The fact that they defended her was evidence that they respected her for what she did for their unit—even her death was honored by those guys."

Walker nodded as he removed his helmet as he saw a nearby bottle filled with a purple liquid; he grabbed it and said,

"A toast to Cal-141 then, may she guide us through this life and after." Shepard knew what that liquid was but couldn't stop the Spartan in time from drinking it. At that instant, Walker fell to the floor as Shepard called Wrex over. The Krogan looked at the fallen Spartan and the bottle as he spoke,

"Yikes, he just drank a bottle of Ryncol without being warned of the effects."

Shepard replied, "Should've warned him before he grabbed the bottle."

Wrex chuckled, "That was Grunt's bottle. Don't tell him that a Super-soldier decided to act tough and drink Ryncol."

Shepard smiled, "He would just commend him for doing something like that."

All of a sudden, the Spartan moved as he raised himself to a sitting position slowly as he asked the shocked human and krogan, "What did I drink?"

Wrex smiled, "You drank Grunt's bottle of Ryncol, and it's a local favorite by krogan alike. But to others, ryncol could tear your insides apart. I'm surprised you managed to recover from its effects very quickly."

Walker asked as he slowly got up to his feet, using the piano as a support, "So I drank something that is considered ground glass to other species?"

Shepard nodded, "And you've recovered from its effects quicker than I did when I drank that stuff."

Walker face-palmed, "This is why I don't drink much."

Wrex gently punched his left shoulder, "Even so, that was the second time that I've seen a human drink ryncol and live."

Walker looked at the empty bottle and said, "I guess I should find Grunt and tell him that I drank his bottle of ryncol."

And soon without protest, he surprisingly walked upstairs towards the upstairs bathroom. He was recovering faster to ryncol than any other alcoholic beverage, must've been his augmentations. He passed by a conversation between Zaeed and Murphy,

"So, you're a pilot and a marine?"

Murphy shrugged, "All of the same, Zaeed. I took a few arts of flying and becoming a marine and when I met the Spartans, my life soon changed all the same."

Zaeed chuckled, "You stole an alien gunship from the heat of battle?"

Murphy finished, "And crashed it into Infinity's hanger bay during a Covenant attack on the ship."

Zaeed asked, "Most pilots I know die in crashes like that. How did you survive?"

Murphy simply stated, "Just luck, I guess."

Zaeed guessed, "And now you are flying a gunship that had the firepower to destroy one of the Normandy's engines despite its shields."

Murphy realized, "I didn't know that the ship had shields. The laser

tore through it like tissue paper."

Zaeed crossed his arms, "Your bird has advanced weaponry for a gunship."

Murphy stated, "It's fitted for full combat pursuit."

Zaeed smiled, "And it's lucky to have you flying it."

The Prefect Spartan entered the upstairs bathroom as he saw Grunt, who was apparently sitting in the shower with the water spraying on top of him. He asked the tank-bred,

"Grunt, are you okay?"

He stirred and said, "Wha? Yeah? I got five credits." Walker set the bottle next to Grunt as he replied,

"Well, I drank your bottle of ryncol by accident." Grunt's eyes instantly shot open as he spoke in joy, "Only a badass would drink my bottle of ryncol. And you are truly a badass for drinking my ryncol and walking away from its effects!"

Walker asked in shock, "Wait, so you are not mad?" Grunt chuckled, "Mad? At you for drinking my ryncol? Ha, that stuff hits aliens like ground glass, but for a Super-Soldier to drink it by accident and walk away from its effects. Heh, impossible to forget." He caressed the bottle, "I'll find a barrel of ryncol to fill the bottle later."

All of a sudden, Wenrum teleported into the bathroom, startling Grunt in the process as the krogan said to the Promethean,

"You'd think I'd get used to you teleporting in and out all of the time."

Wenrum apologized, "I apologize, but Shepard requests all party goers to meet him by the bar in the living room."

Walker helps Grunt up, "Come on, Grunt. I guess we should see what Shepard wants."

* * *

><p>Once they reached the downstairs living room, Shepard was standing by the sofa and spoke,<p>

"Let's get a photo remember this." He pointed to the sofa, "Arrange yourselves on the sofa."

Edi spoke, "An excellent suggestion, Shepard." Liara approached, "Great idea. I want a copy."

Wrex charged forth, "Make way, make way!" Tanner vaulted over Wrex, "Super-soldiers first, T-Wrex!"

Davenport chuckled, "Josh is one big jokester." Grayson sat on the left arm of the sofa, "Where's John?"

An armored finger tapped his shoulder as Walker revealed himself

sitting on the sofa as Shepard sat in the center, Tali sat between the Spartan and Shepard. Liara sat between Walker and Grayson.

Davenport sat on the right arm of the sofa that had Joker and Edi while Tanner stood next to her. Wenrum took position in the back with Wrex, James, Javik, Grunt, Garrus and Zaeed. Murphy took position between Traynor and Kaidan in the middle as Shepard asked,

"You ready, Glyph?" The drone spoke, "Of course. If you could all please direct your attention this way."

Shepard told everyone, "Okay, everybody say, "Normandy."

They all said in unison, "Normandy!" The photo snapped as Shepard thought up of something else,

"This is also for Welcoming Fireteam Crimson to the Normandy." He turned to the Walker, "Would you like to do the honors, Spartan?"

Walker smiled, "Glyph, can you adjust the background to the Pelican's exterior?"

Glyph complied, "Thanks to Wenrum's updates on my camera, I can adjust the background settings."

Walker smiled, "I know this might not mean anything to anyone else. But it does to us; I want everyone to say "UNSC"

They all complied and said in unison, "UNSC!" The photo snapped.

A/N Whewâ€|that was a long one. Now these Spartans have a great dose of a good shore leave in their boots. But I'm not going to go through the traditional Citadel End of Shore Leave just yet.

Let's just say that the Spartans would have to meet with one of the Citadel Councilors about something peculiar after they honor an old friend of Shepard.

See ya around on the next chapter of Prefect Spartan!

End
file.